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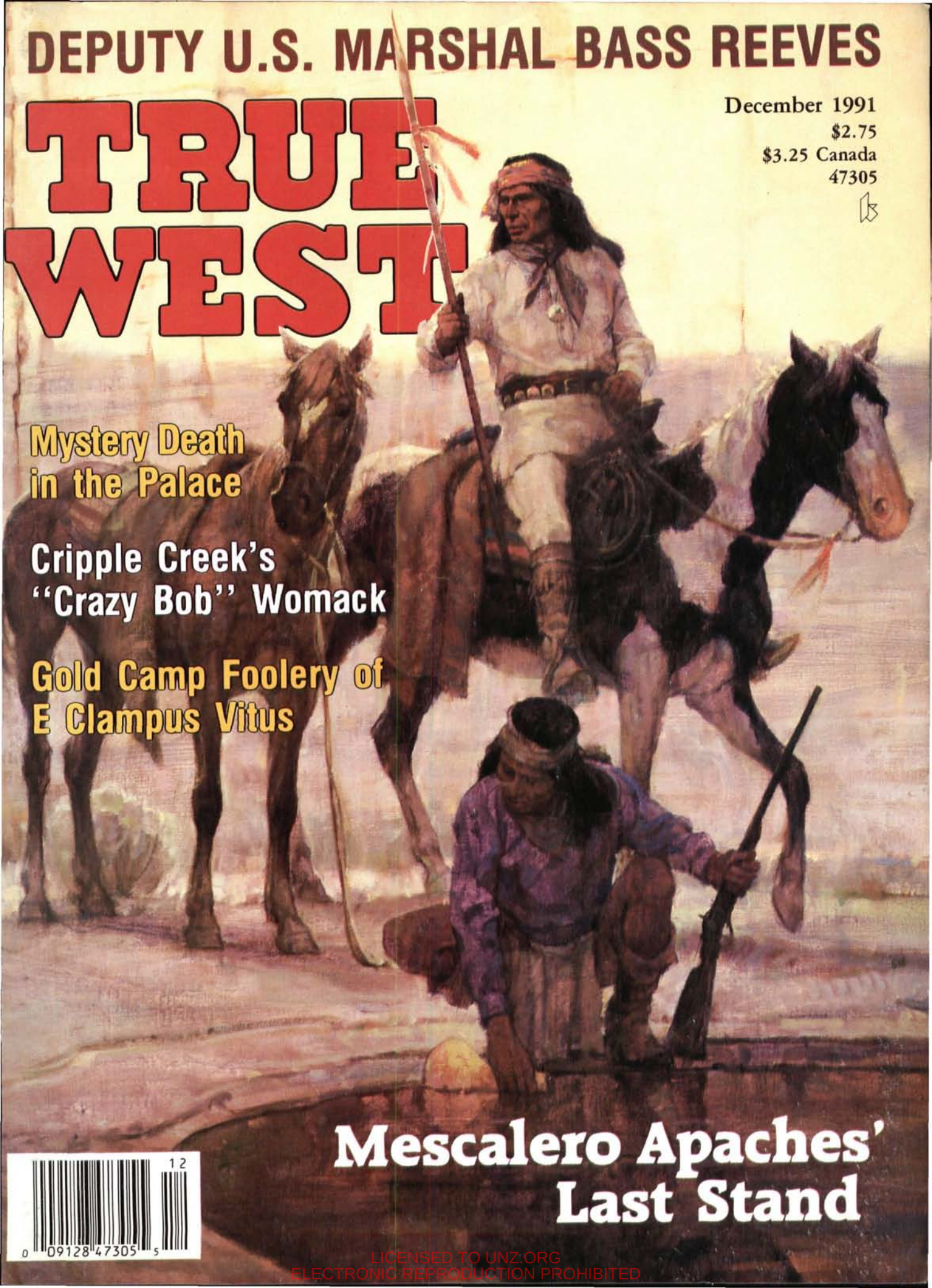

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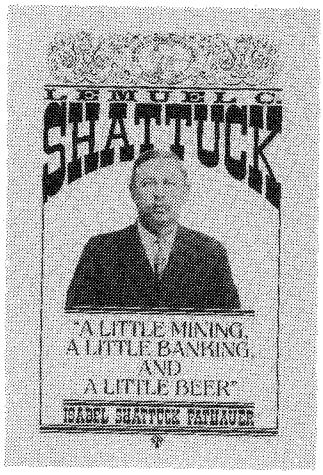

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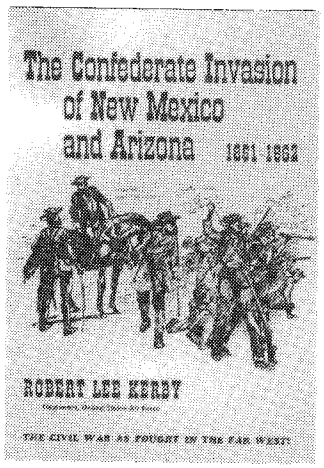

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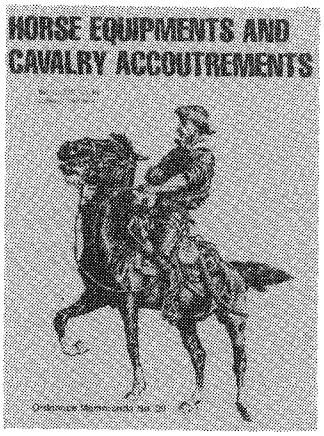

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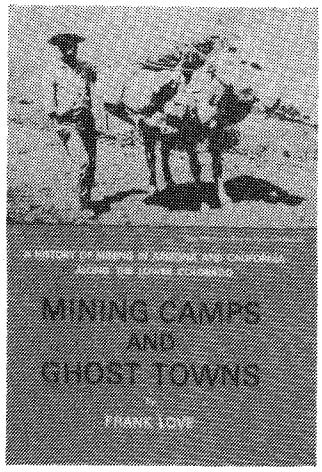

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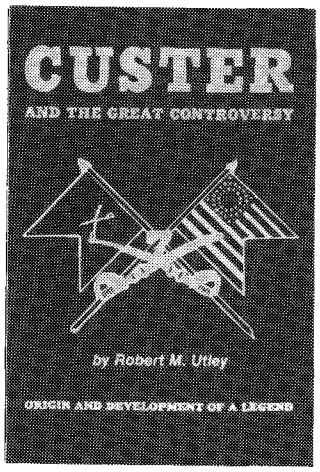

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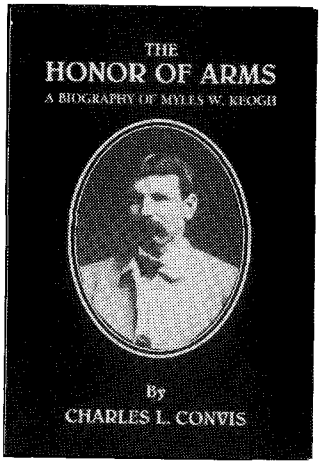

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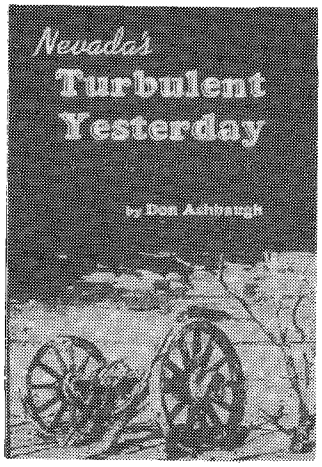

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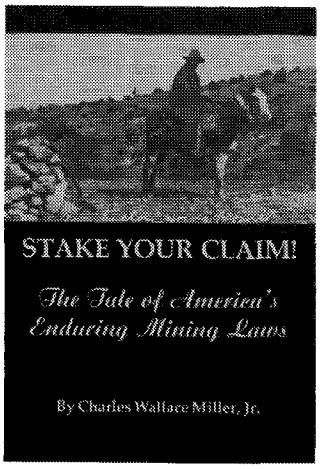

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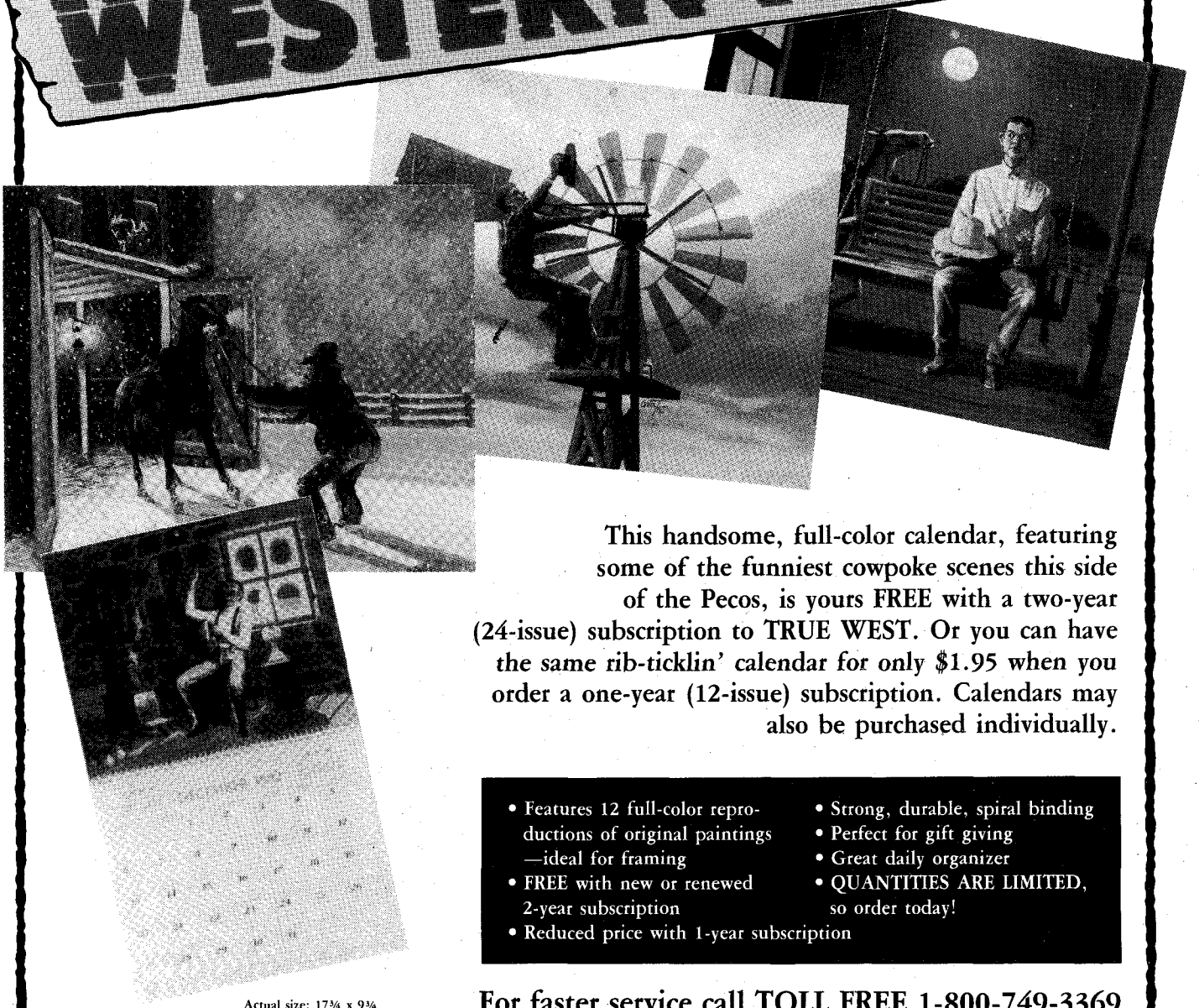

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From the Editor

Howdy, folks!

This issue marks my seventh anniversary in the editor's chair here at TRUE WEST, and I feel a fit of philisophizin' a-comin' on. In the general scheme of things, I don't reckon that seventh anniversaries are considered important landmarks—not like fifth or tenth or twenty-fifth anniversaries, anyhow. But we're a maverick outfit, and we do things differently than other folks. We celebrate seventh anniversaries.

Adding to this contemplative feeling I'm trying to ward off is that I finally caved in and ordered myself a new editor's chair here at the office. The one I've occupied for the last seven years warn't new when I took it over, and in the interim it's got old and broke down and is a-playin' H-E-double-L with my pore old posterior and back.

But I'm a sorter sentimental feller who hangs onto things until they fall apart, and I have a lot of fond feelings for this old editor's chair with which I am about to part company. In fact, the first order I was given as the mighty surprised and nervous new editor of TRUE WEST was to "slip on over into the editor's chair."

I was afeared I just might slip on and keep on a-slippin' right off again. But ever the obedient servant, I "slipped on over,"'and though it's sometimes been more like riding an outlaw bronc than sitting at a desk in a nice office, I somehow managed to stay aboard until this old mount and I grew comfortable with each other—and then uncomfortable again. So I'm putting it out to pasture and getting me a new, rough-broke, good-posture, no-more-aching-back, politically correct, and unpretentious typist's chair with no fancy features except arms to hold me in when I doze off.

Anyhow, as I sat down to write this, the last editorial I'll compose seated on this faithful old chair, I got to reflecting on all the things I've learned in it over the last seven years. And I just figured I'd go ahead and share a few of them with you all, if you don't mind. If you do mind, stop right here and turn the page to one of the good parts of this here magazine.

The very first thing I learned about editing is never to put anything in writing. Just as sure as I commit anything to paper, somebody somewhere is going to find something wrong with it. Then I have to spend the next three or four issues making corrections, offering alibis, and generally keeping an eye open for lynch mobs and bushwhackers. (Despite my best efforts to follow that rule, I cain't figure out how to get by with leaving these two columns of TRUE WEST blank every month. Instead, I've learned to sharpen my prose so keen that I can cut a swath through six hundred words or more while saying absolutely nothing.)

The second thing I learned was never to believe a word I hear or read. I will no more than decide I have a source reliable enough to go to press with than I discover another source proving beyond doubt that the first source is wrong and yet another source proving beyond doubt that the second source is wrong, too. Once again, I have to spend the next three or four issues making corrections, offering alibis, and generally keeping an eye open for lynch mobs and bushwhackers.

The most surprising thing I learned is that contrary to conventional wisdom and natural law, old outlaws never die—they just pay someone else to take the bullet, and then they come back in a thousand incarnations as Brushy Bill Roberts, J. Frank Dalton, and William T. Phillips.

I learned that there were actually not one but two George Armstrong Custers. One was the most brilliant, courageous, noble human being ever to walk the face of the earth. The other was the most stupid, blood-thirsty, power hungry murderer ever to walk the face of the earth. There were two Wyatt Earps, as well. One was the most law-abiding, courageous, noble human being ever to walk the earth. The other was the most corrupt, cowardly, cold-blooded killer ever to walk the earth.

In general I've learned just how little I really know about the fascinating history of our American West, and the more I learn about it, the more I learn how little I really know. But more than anything else, I've learned what a wonderful, dedicated, close-knit family TRUE WESTerners comprise. Thanks, you all, for letting me wear out this old chair. I hope you'll be as tolerant of me in the new one as you've been in the old.

John Joerschke

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The Camp on the Rio Grande

I found John Legg's "Fort Concho Recreates Army Post Life" (TRUE WEST, October 1991) most interesting and educational. The old fort has been changed greatly since I visited there while researching the life of Colonel George Gipson Huntt, who was one of the two army officers who located the post there in 1867.

On September 16, 1867, Colonel Huntt (then Captain, Fourth U.S. Cavalry), with an escort of one corporal and six privates, left Camp Chadbourne, searching for a better location for a fort in the area. Colonel Strang had suggested three possible locations for the fort. Strang, Huntt, and Brigadier General John P. Hatch had served on the board that was to decide the final location.

After studying the Oak Creek area, another point on the Rio Concho about eight miles above the military road crossing, and Fort Concho's present location, the last site was chosen. It offered excellent water resources, abundant wood for heavy construction, and heavy limestone formations from which to quarry building bricks. Plentiful grazing forage supported huge herds of buffalo, and the hay camps in the meadows that summer had laid up tons of good, cured feed for livestock. A large sawmill had already cut and sawed several thousand feet of lumber that would be properly cured for building the next summer.

After studying the reports, the board decided unanimously to build near the confluence of the North and Concho rivers. The new fort was made impregnable from Indian attacks and before any official name was chosen it was called simply "The Camp on the Rio Concho." The fort served the army for twenty-one years and was abandoned by the military in 1889, as John Legg points out. It is fortunate that over the years enough people were interested to preserve the best of it.—**Harry E. Chrisman, 10245 West 14th Avenue, Denver, Colorado 80215.**

Editor's Note: Thanks for the additional information, pard. One of the Fort Con-

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cho volunteers also wrote about the article, to tell us that the barracks row is on the north side of the parade grounds, not the west as stated in the article. He also informs us that the photograph we labeled the post headquarters is in fact the post hospital. Finally, the equestrian review is in May, and admission prices are now $1.50 for adults and $1.00 for children.

City Slicker from "Big D"

Enclosed is my check to renew my subscription to TRUE WEST. I sure as heck don't want to miss out on a single issue.

I'm a "city slicker," myself, from "Big D" (oftentimes referred to as Dallas, Texas). But I can attest to the fact that a whole lot of us Big City dwellers are crazy as all "git-out" about your mag. They're gone from the shelves of most of the Fancy Dan bookstores as fast as the magazine distributor can put 'em on the shelves.

Why, heck-fire, you can't hardly find any used copies in stores that cater to folks who prefer recycled reading matter. When I get lucky and find an old issue I grab it up faster than lightnin' 'cause I know it won't stay there for long. This means most dedicated readers keep your great mags.

I've got to keep a close eye on the ones I have 'cause some side-winder might go south with a bunch of the ones I have save up. Keep up the great work pardners. As long as you keep printin' 'em, I'll keep on reading every issue.—**Bill Tully, 6223 Stichter Avenue, Dallas, Texas 75230.**

Editor's Note: Thanks! I would have published your letter even without all that flattery. And I *might* have published it even without all the apostrophes.

Keep on *buyin'* 'em and tellin' all your city slicker friends about 'em, and especially keep pesterin' your booksellers to keep 'em in stock. Tell Mr. Fancy Dan if he needs more I'll personally mail 'em to him.

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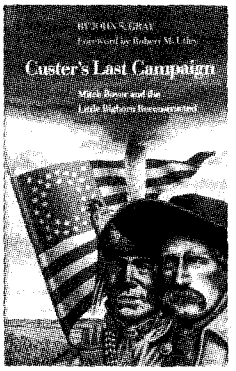

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202—On Time for Disaster: The Rescue of Custer's Command. *By McClermand.* 176pp. 1989 reprint. Neb. **$6.95p**

214—Archaeological Insights into the Custer Battle. *By Scott & Fox.* 138pp. 1989 reprint. Univ. of Okla. **$14.95p**

219—The Custer Album: A Pictorial Biography... *By Frost.* 192pp. 1990 reprint. Univ. of Okla. **$15.95p**

241—The Little Big Horn, 1876: The Official Communications, Documents and Reports... *Comp. by Overfield.* 203pp. 1990 reprint. Univ. of Neb. **$8.95p**

247—The Custer Adventure. *By Upton.* 119pp. 1975. Upton & Sons. **$30.00c**

251—Custer in '76: Walter Camp's Notes on the Custer Fight. *Ed. by Hammer.* 303pp. 1990 reprint. Univ. of Okla. **$14.95p**

255—Custer's 7th Cavalry and the Campaign of 1873. *By Frost.* 255pp. Upton & Sons. **$45.00c**

265—The Benteen-Goldin Letters on Custer and His Last Battle. *Ed. by Carroll.* 312pp. 1991 reprint. Univ. of Neb. **$9.95p**

277—Shovels and Speculation: Archaeology Hunts Custer. *By Barnard.* 64pp. 1990. AST Press. **$12.00p**

281—Custer Battle Casualties: Burials, Exhumations, and Reinterments. *By Hardorff.* 1990. Upton & Sons. **$35.00c**

295—The Life of General George Armstrong Custer. *By Monaghan.* 478pp. Univ. of Neb. Press. **$10.95p**

296—Custer's Gold: The United States Cavalry Expedition of 1874. *By Jackson.* 166pp. 1972. Univ. of Neb. Press. **$7.50p**

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Lampasas, Texas, died February 4, 1991. He had served a number of years as Lampasas County judge. His father, John Tom Higgins, Sr., had also served twelve years in the same post.

During his recent years, John Tom Higgins had lived on a ranch three miles east of town. It is very near "Battle Branch" and other landmarks of the feud between the Higgins and Horrell factions. His wife recently gave me some material about John Pinckney Calhoun Higgins, much of which I had never heard of, so I'm sending it to "Great Western Gunfights" columnist Bill O'Neal. Bill once taught at the high school in Lampasas, and he had relatives who rode with the Higgins group in those troubled days.—**Morris Bell, 120 North 29, Gatesville, Texas 76528.**

Editor's Note: I'm sure Bill O'Neal will be interested in the material you sent. Incidentally, our Barbed Wire Press is printing Bill's latest book, which will be available soon. Titled *Fighting Men of the Indian Wars,* it's an encyclopedia similar to his well-known and respected *Encyclopedia of Western Gunfighters.* Watch for our announcement of its publication!

Joads, Not Jodes

It's J-O-A-D-S, not J-O-D-E-S in my favorite book, *The Grapes of Wrath* ("Truly Western," TRUE WEST, September 1991). I miss Joe Small, but you are doing a good job.—**Helen Williams, P.O. Box 517, Millville, Pennsylvania 17846.**

Editor's Note: Yes, you're right, and if it were possible to find a copy of that book in the state of Oklahoma, I would have checked the spelling before we went to press. Thanks for the kind words!

Your letters and comments are welcome. Please keep letters to 300 words or less. All letters received by Western Publications will be considered for publication unless otherwise stipulated in the letter. Space does not permit us to print all letters we receive. Be sure to include full name, address, and zip code. Photos welcome. Address all letters to Western Publications, P.O. Box 2107, Stillwater, OK 74076.

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Gardner Exhibit Begins Tour

The first retrospective exhibition of the photographs of Alexander Gardner is on display at the Chrysler Museum in Norfolk, Virginia, through January 5, 1992. "An Enduring Interest: The Photographs of Alexander Gardner" recounts the photographer's life and explores the significance of his work. Best known for his Civil War photography, Gardner also photographed many parts of the West and was one of the first men to photograph American Indians, both in their native surroundings and in studio portraits.

Gardner was born in Scotland in 1821 and arrived in the United States in 1858. He went to work for photographer Mathew Brady and soon was managing his Washington, D.C., studio. During the Civil War, Gardner pioneered photojournalism, becoming the first to capture battlefield scenes on the day a battle occurred. Many of those images were stereographs, designed to be seen three-dimensionally in a viewer. Visitors to "An Enduring Interest" can see a selection of those photographs in special viewers.

In addition to photographing Civil War-era figures and scenes, Gardner photographed many of the delegations of Indians who visited the capital. Brooks Johnson, curator of photography at the Chrysler Museum, said Gardner had a unique approach to photographing those Indians. "He photographed his American Indian sitters when they were still unspoiled by the white man's influence or changes. It's important to note that Gardner treated them as visiting diplomats when he photographed them. Posed in groups and with the white men, the more powerful chiefs would be seated in the center surrounded by the others. His portraits also capture a sense of them as interesting people with their own cultures rather than showing them in the condescending or romantic manner more prevalent by artists at the time."

With the westward expansion, Gardner made some of the earliest views of the railroad's progress across the American West. In 1867 he accompanied a survey for the Union Pacific Railway of a proposed rail route from Kansas to southern California. On that trip Gardner made stereographs; full-plate views; and large, imperial-sized images of the landscape, ancient rock formations, the growing construction sites

(continued on page 10)

Smithsonian Institution, National Anthropological Archives

Medicine Bear, photographed by Alexander Gardner in 1872.

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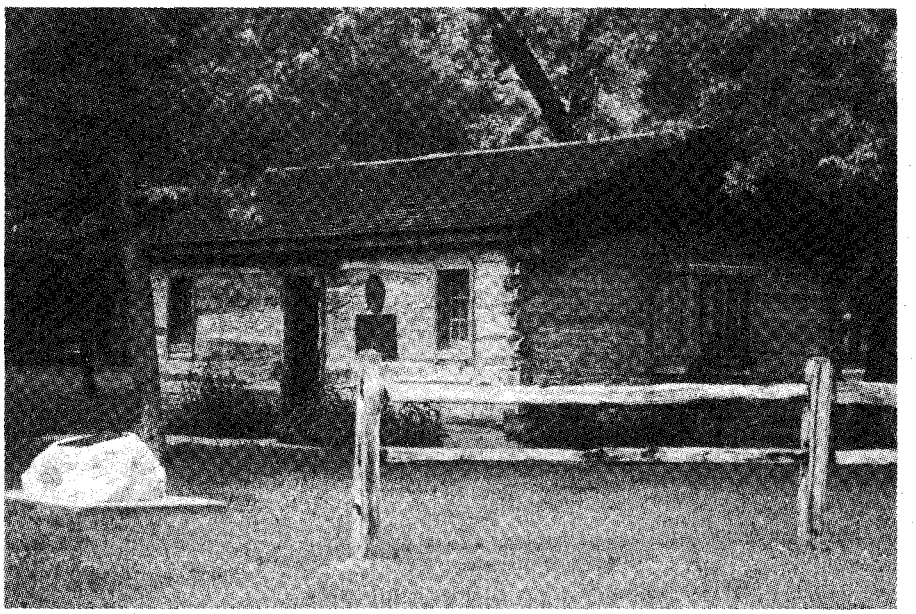
Restored Station Honors Pony Ex

By LORENE L. PARKER

One of very few of its kind left, the original Pony Express Station at Gothenburg, Nebraska, is not just part of the past, it is also part of the present. Where ponies and riders once raced in and out, now tourists by the hundreds come for a glimpse of the Old West.

The building was built on the Oregon Trail in 1854 and served as a fur-trading post and ranch house until 1860–61, when it became a Pony Express Station. The completion of the overland telegraph forced the abandonment of



The restored Pony Express station at Gothenburg, Nebraska.

Author's Photo

Gardner Exhibit

(continued from page 9)

and railroad towns, and the American Indians he encountered. One hundred of Gardner's stereographs from this excursion will be mounted in viewers in the exhibition galleries.

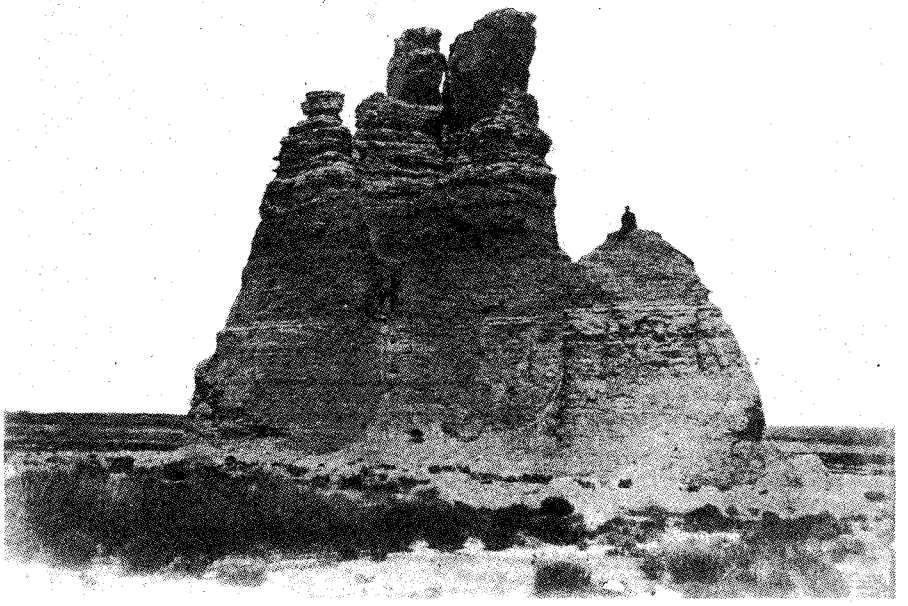
Gardner was present at Fort Laramie, Wyoming, in 1868 when the United States government signed a treaty with the Brulé, Crow, Northern Cheyenne, Arapahoe, Ogalala, and Miniconjou Dakota tribes. Several of the photographs Gardner took of the event will be in the exhibit.

Johnson said an exhibit of Gardner's work has not been organized previously because most of his notes, correspondence, and glass negatives have been destroyed. "We don't know a whole lot about the man," said Johnson. "But from the bits and pieces that we do have, we know that Gardner was a fascinating individual both as a person and as a photographer. He worked during a turbulent period of American history and compiled an incredible list of accomplishments."

As an introduction to the exhibition, visitors may view a thirty-minute video produced by the Chrysler Museum. Using interviews, location shootings, and original images, the video illustrates Gardner's life and the importance of his work in nineteenth century America.

Following exhibition at the Chrysler, "An Enduring Interest" will travel to the Akron Art Museum in Akron, Ohio, the International Center of Photography in New York City, and the Gilcrease Museum in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

The Chrysler Museum is located at Olney Road and Mowbray Arch a few blocks from downtown Norfolk. The museum is open Tuesday through Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and Sunday from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. A three-dollar donation is suggested for admission.



Missouri Historical Society

Alexander Gardner's "Castle Rock, Kansas, on the Smoky Hill," photographed in 1867.

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›ress Riders

the express station after sixteen months of operation.

Realizing its historic value, Mrs. C.A. Williams donated the building to the Gothenburg American Legion Post Number 64 in 1931. That summer the Post began relocating the old station to the Gothenburg City Park. The building was disassembled and each piece was tagged for easy identification. Once in Gothenburg it was reassembled piece-by-piece. The work was finished in September 1931. On October 2, 1931, the building was dedicated to the memory of Pony Express riders and other Old West pioneers.

The station consists of one large room and includes many Express-related artifacts. One such exhibit is a Bible, dating to 1860, of the type given to Express riders after they had taken an oath to conduct themselves honestly and not swear, fight, or abuse their animals.

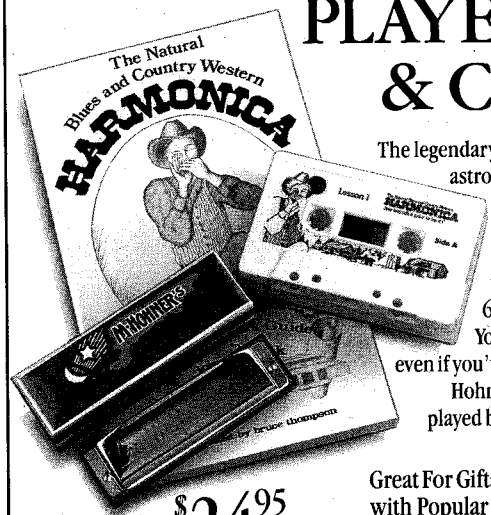
The Pony Express Station is open daily during the summer from 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. In May and September the hours are 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Arizona Ranch Life Focus of Display

An exhibit depicting ranch life over the last century is at the Arizona Hall of Fame Museum in Phoenix. "Cattle Ranchers: An Arizona Legacy" will run from November 4, 1991, until September 1992. Visitors will have the opportunity to see ranch family photographs and authentic ranch equipment.

The Hall of Fame Museum is located in the restored Carnegie public library at 1101 West Washington Street. It is open Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Guided tours are available by calling (602) 542-4581.

Western Roundup is a report on places to go and things to see associated with the history of the Old West. Submissions are welcome. Information on scheduled events should be submitted at least four months prior to the event. Items on historic places are also welcome. Send information including photos to: Western Roundup, Western Publications, P.O. Box 2107, Stillwater, OK 74076.



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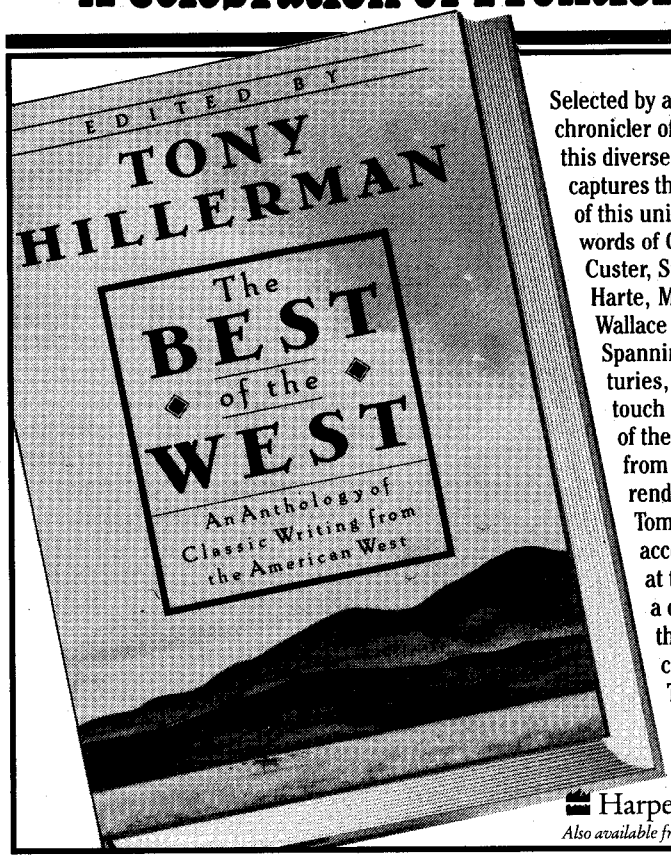

Selected by a great contemporary chronicler of the American West, this diverse collection vividly captures the color and character of this unique landscape in the words of George Armstrong Custer, Stephen Crane, Bret Harte, Meriwether Lewis, Wallace Stegner, and more. Spanning nearly five centuries, these 140 pieces touch on nearly every facet of the Western experience, from chief Joseph's surrender speech to the Tombstone *Epitaph* account of the gunfight at the O.K. Corral; from a diary entry by one of the first women to cross the Santa Fe Trail to John Steinbeck's reflections on Highway 66.

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Charlie Bowdre: Lincoln County

By CHUCK PARSONS

Charlie Bowdre was a noted New Mexico "regulator." Leo F. Smith, 640 East Eagle Street, Kankakee, Illinois 60901, wrote to ask if the man was missing any fingers. Mr. Smith also wants to know if the Earp brothers ever lived in Idaho Falls, Idaho, and if Billy the Kid had any notches on his gun.

As far as history records, Bowdre had no missing fingers. In a gunfight at Blazer's Mill on April 4, 1878, Bowdre was one of a group of fourteen "regulators" which also included Billy the Kid and Dick Brewer. The gang engaged Andrew L. "Buckshot" Roberts in a gunfight.

With the odds at fourteen to one, it is not surprising that Roberts was killed, but before he was out of action he did a lot of damage. He killed Brewer with a shot to the head and put John Middleton out of the fight with a bullet through a lung. One of Roberts' rounds hit Bowdre in the cartridge belt, knocking the wind out of him and cutting the belt so that it fell off. The same round ricochetted off the belt and hit George Coe in the hand. That bullet mangled Coe's trigger finger and thumb. It was not Bowdre but his companion, Coe, who lost part of his right hand in the fight.

As for the Earps, they left Tombstone, Arizona, after fighting there had left Morgan Earp dead and Virgil without the use of an arm. Wyatt went to Kansas; then he and brother James took part in the Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, gold rush, supplementing their income with saloon keeping. Since it is only about 350 miles, as the crow flies, from Coeur d'Alene to Idaho Falls, it is possible they were there at one time.

Wyatt was later in such divergent places as Colorado; Guthrie, Oklahoma; San Diego, and other parts of California. He participated in the Klondike gold rush of 1898, then ran a saloon for a while in Nome, Alaska, in 1900. He also salooned in Tonopah and Goldfield, Nevada, finally settling in Los Angeles in 1906.

Nita Steward Haley Memorial Library

Charles Bowdre and wife.

Finally, I do not believe Billy the Kid, or any other gunfighter of note, actually notched his pistol. That is a myth Hollywood and other fictioneers have created.

Marais des Cygnes

The Marais des Cygnes massacre was part of the pre-Civil War struggle between pro-slavery men and free-state forces in Kansas. Bill Ward, 100 N. Kalaheo Avenue, Kallua, Oahu, Hawaii 96734, wrote to find out more about this episode of "bleeding Kansas."

In April 1858 James Montgomery, a noted abolitionist chieftain, began driving pro-slavery men out of the territory. Among them were Charles A. Hamilton (or Hambelton) and some friends who lived around Trading Post, a settlement on the Marais des Cygnes in Linn County. They went back to Missouri, but Hamilton planned to return for revenge.

On May 19 Hamilton and his gang rode into Trading Post and began capturing victims. From there and the surrounding area Hamilton gathered up eleven men. None were armed and none had taken part in factional fighting. They knew Hamilton but none suspected he would seriously harm them; however, the gang took their prisoners to a deep gorge near the Marais de Cygnes and lined them up in front of a firing squad. Hamilton gave the order to fire and fired the first shot himself. Some died instantly, others feigned death and managed to survive. William Colpetzer, Patrick Ross, William A. Stilwell, Michael Robinson, and John F. Campbell were all killed.

At Trading Post there is a monument to the memory of the massacre victims. It is on the edge of the Marais des Cygnes Waterfowl Refuge, about sixty miles straight south of Kansas City on Highway 69.

Governor Hubbard of Texas

Texas has produced many historic figures, and long-time TRUE WEST reader L.S. Bush, P.O. Box 54, Chestnut Mount, Tennessee 38552, wrote to ask if the state ever had a governor named Hubbard.

It certainly did. Richard Bennett Hubbard was governor from December 1876 until his retirement in 1879. He was born in Georgia on November 1, 1832, graduated from Mercer College in 1851, and from Harvard Law School in 1853. He established a law practice in Tyler, Texas, and became politically active. President James Buchanan, whom Hubbard had supported, appointed him United States district attorney for the western district of Texas in 1858, but Hubbard resigned the post the following year to run for the state legislature.

During the Civil War Hubbard commanded the Twenty-second Texas Cavalry regiment as a colonel. He gradually increased his political strength and was elected lieutenant governor of Texas in 1873 and 1876. When Governor Richard Coke became a U.S. senator in December 1876, Hubbard became governor. Three years later he retired and returned to his private law practice. He also con-

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Regulator

tinued his political life and served as temporary chairman of the Democratic National Convention in 1884 and as U.S. minister to Japan from 1885 to 1889. Hubbard died July 12, 1901. The town of Hubbard in Hill County was named for him.

A Badman's Bibliography

Bernard MacKinnon, P.O. Box 371, Glace Bay, Nova Scotia, Canada B1A 5V4, considers Billy the Kid "the very essence of the Old West," and wrote to ask for the definitive histories of the New Mexico gunman.

For books, I recommend Robert M. Utley's *Billy the Kid* (University of Nebraska Press, 1989), which contains the only authenticated photograph of the Kid, as well as numerous other illustrations. I also recommend Utley's *High Noon in Lincoln* (University of New Mexico Press, 1987), which deals with the Lincoln County War and the Kid's role in that fight. *Merchants, Guns, and Money* (Museum of New Mexico Press, 1987), by John P. Wilson, is a profusely illustrated history of the Lincoln County War and other smaller "wars" in the county.

Those are excellent books that are still in print. To fully appreciate the Kid's contribution to history and literature, I also recommend J.C. Dykes' *Billy the Kid: A Bibliography of a Legend.* It lists 437 items, from books and articles to musical works, which deal with the Kid. It was published in 1972 and is currently being updated to reflect contributions to Kid literature since then.

If you have a question, send it to Chuck Parsons, Western Publications, P.O. Box 2107, Stillwater, OK 74076. Please keep questions brief. Sign your full name and address, including zip code. Names and addresses will be published if question is used. Space limitations may not permit us to use all questions.

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Last Stand of the Mescalero Apaches in Texas

By W.C. JAMESON

Following a series of raids throughout southern New Mexico, west Texas, and northern Chihuahua, Mescalero Apache Chief Victorio and his warrior band numbering around 250 sought refuge in the rugged fastness of the Tres Castillos Mountains located in Mexico some sixty miles south-southeast of El Paso, Texas. Here the Mescaleros were determined to rest and regroup prior to resuming raids in the area. The Indians had with them over 500 horses and mules taken in recent raids.

Although the Apaches took a lot of livestock and had burned and destroyed nearly every place they attacked, they killed very few people, choosing instead to steal clothing and tools. Both the United States Cavalry and the Texas Rangers had chased the Indians into Mexico, but the Apaches believed neither force posed a significant threat to them in their mountain stronghold.

However, the Mexican government decided it had had enough of Victorio and sent General Joaquin Terrazas in pursuit with an army of 400 Yaqui Indians armed with the latest Remington pistols and carbines. Terrazas had orders to eliminate the Apache menace from northern Chihuahua once and for all.

On the morning of October 14, 1880, Terrazas and his mounted force rode toward the Apache camp in the Tres Castillos Mountains. Just the day before Victorio had sent his war chief, Nana, and fifty warriors out on a raid to procure more horses. About one hundred warriors and an equal number of women and children remained in camp. Victorio's scouts had informed him of the approaching soldiers but the chief believed his warriors could defend their stronghold against a force even as large as Terrazas'.

At sundown Terrazas surrounded the Apache encampment, then waited until morning. However, during the night twelve of Victorio's braves, along with four women and four children, slipped through the army's perimeter and fled toward Texas.

The following morning Victorio and his warriors mounted their horses and in a brave front rode slowly toward the Mexican army. The Mexican version of what happened next states that the soldiers opened fire as soon as the In-

A survivor of the attack had concealed himself in nearby rocks and went unnoticed by the Indians. After the Mescaleros rode off, the frightened soldier struck out on foot toward Fort Quitman.

Illustrations by E. LISLE REEDSTROM

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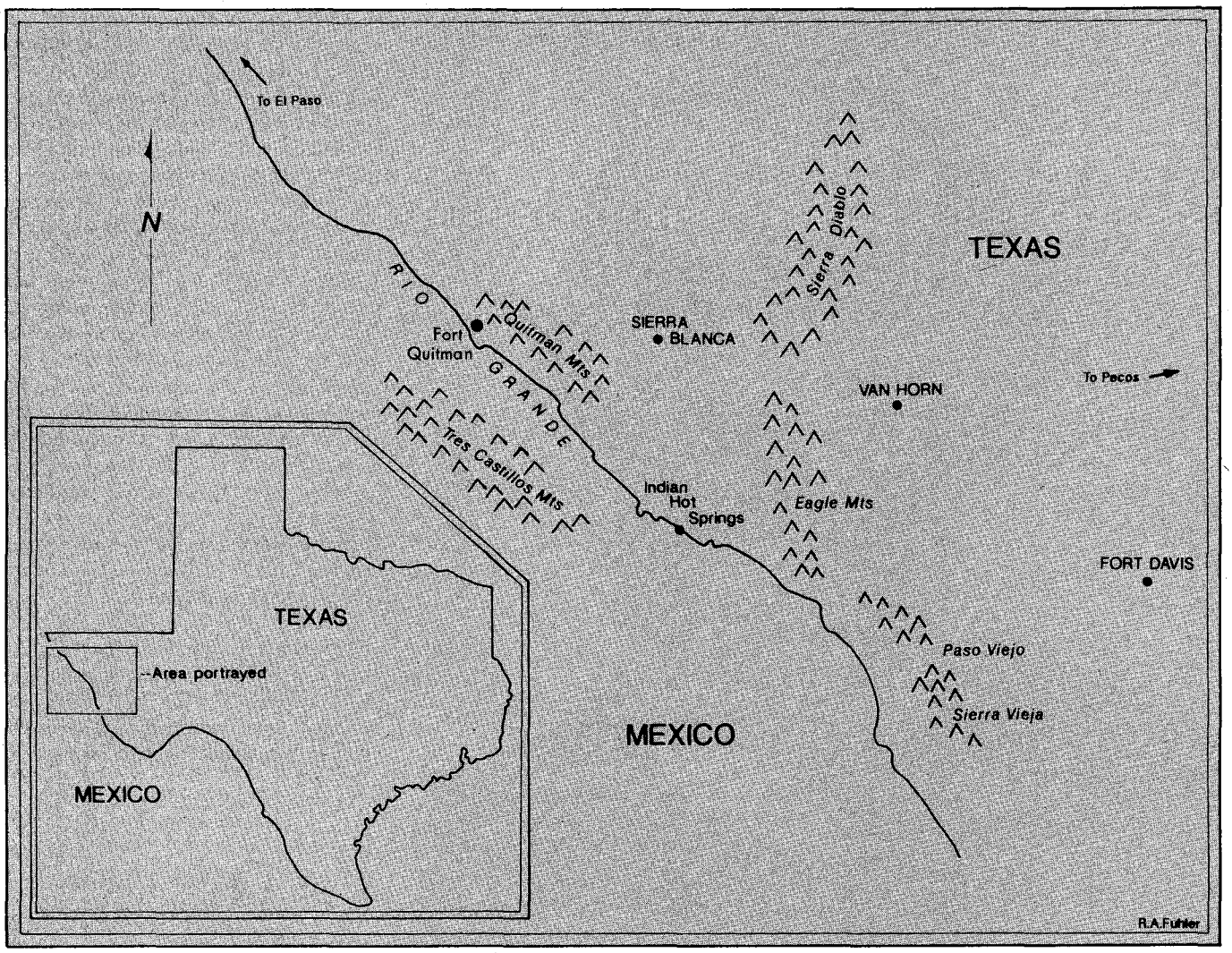

dians were within range and Victorio was killed instantly from two bullets in his chest. The Apache version claims that Victorio took his own life with a knife during the close of the battle. Regardless, the superior number and overwhelming firepower of Terrazas' army resulted in a complete rout that saw eighty-seven of Victorio's band killed and the remainder captured. The Mexican army lost only two men.

The group of twenty Indians that had fled the Apache camp the previous night crossed the Rio Grande on their way to the Eagle Mountains, a noted Mescalero hideout in west Texas. Once across the border the band initiated a series of raids that included robbery and murder unequalled by any other Indian raid in Texas history. The fact that only twelve Apache warriors were involved made the depredations all the more amazing.

No one knows for certain where the band of renegades crossed the Rio Grande, but several days later the Indians attacked a small force of buffalo soldiers at Paso Viejo, some ninety miles as the crow flies from the Tres Castillos Mountains.

Paso Viejo is a narrow gap in the Sierra Vieja range which parallels the Rio Grande and is located twelve miles east of Valentine, Texas. Lieutenant S.C. Mills, a recent graduate of West Point but with no Indian fighting experience, led the black cavalry patrol. His four Pueblo Indian guides advised him to set up camp in the flat, open area about three miles north of the pass. They told Mills that a camp on the plains would give them a clear field of vision for miles around and thus reduce the danger of attack by the Mescaleros. Furthermore, the Mescaleros often used Paso Viejo as a campground because of good water and grazing. Mills, believing he knew better, ignored the advice and ordered his men to set up camp in the gap.

The renegade band of twenty Indians arrived at Paso Viejo during the night and immediately detected the cavalry camp. The Apaches concealed themselves in nearby rocks which surrounded the campground, and they awaited the dawn.

Shortly after sunrise when the unsuspecting soldiers were preparing their breakfast and readying their mounts, the Indians began firing from the rocks. Almost instantly one of the Pueblo guides and six of the soldiers were killed. Panic broke out and Mills and the remainder of the troops either rode or fled on foot from the area. The remaining three Pueblo scouts chose to stay and fight with the Apaches. After about an hour of trading gunfire, the Mescaleros left.

A few days later, a wagon train of westbound immigrant settlers were negotiating Bass Canyon, a low pass in some mountains about fifteen miles west of Van Horn, Texas. In the middle of the pass the renegades attacked the train, killing a man and woman. Another man had his thigh shattered by an Apache rifle slug. The immigrants put up a much better fight than the Mescaleros had anticipated, and after about a half hour of shooting, the Indians once again disappeared.

From here, the trail of the renegade Mescalero band proceeded southward

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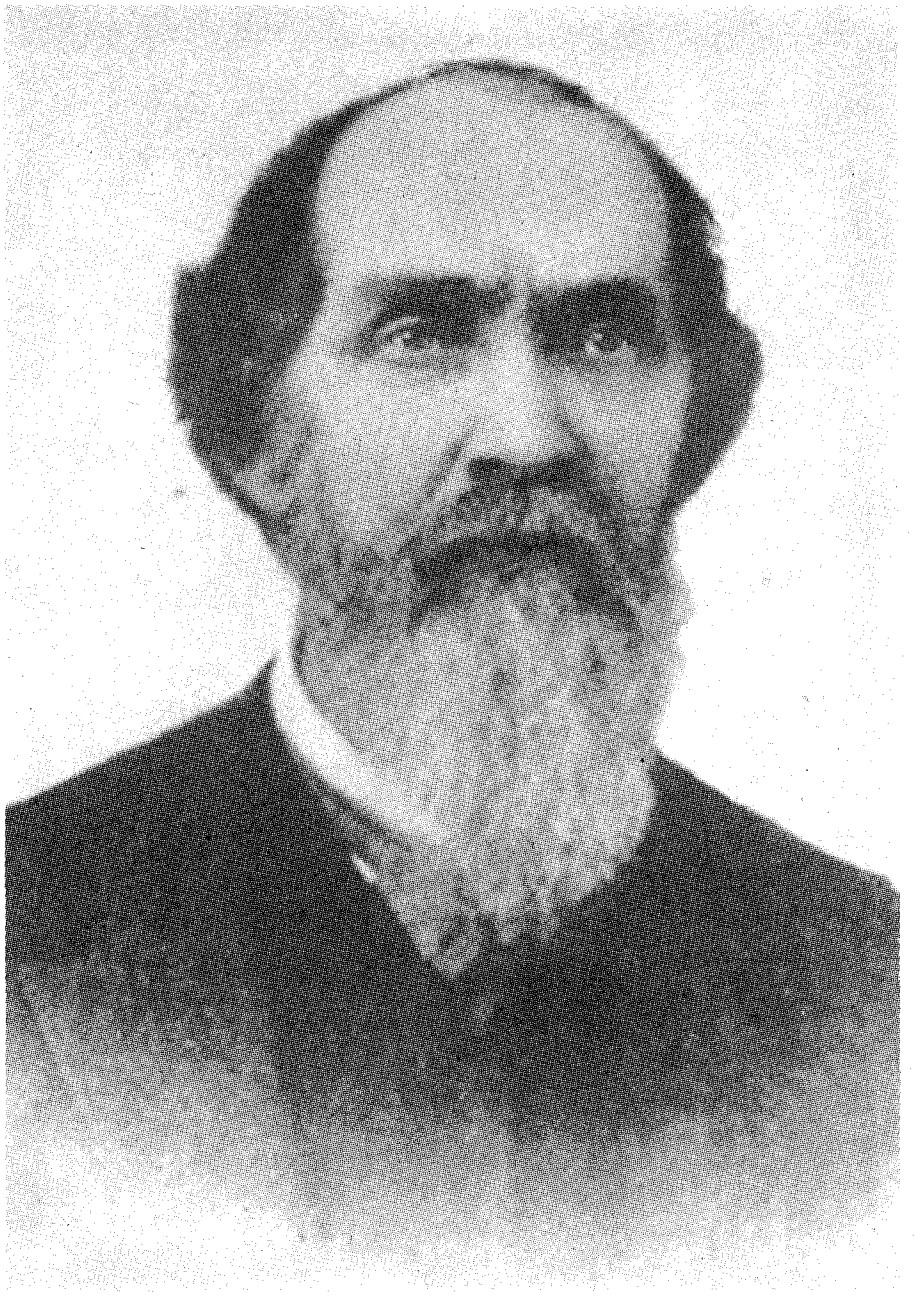

Courtesy of the Author

Captain George W. Baylor.

and recrossed the river into Mexico. They were not seen for several days, but they may have camped, hunted, and ranged near Indian Hot Springs on the Rio Grande.

On the morning of October 28, 1880, a black cavalry patrol under Sergeant Charles Perry, sent out by Colonel Benjamin Grierson from Fort Quitman, set up a night camp at Indian Hot Springs. The soldiers were unaware of the fact that the Mescaleros favored the spot as a campground or that the small band of Apaches was close by. They were convinced that the Apache menace had disappeared with the death of Victorio at Tres Castillos, so they neglected to scout the area or post guards.

As the soldiers prepared their breakfast on the morning of October 29, the Mescaleros rose from the adjacent rocks and initiated a steady barrage of rifle fire on the unsuspecting cavalry, killilng five of the soldiers and scattering the rest. In the ensuing confusion, the Mescaleros made off with four cavalry horses, two pack mules, and all of the equipment and firearms the fleeing soldiers abandoned. Before the Apaches departed Indian Hot Springs, they took the long iron pins used to stake the mounts and ran them through the chests of the dead soldiers, securing the bodies firmly to the ground.

A survivor of the attack who was unable to escape had concealed himself in nearby rocks and went unnoticed by the Indians. After the Mescaleros finally mounted up and rode off, the frightened soldier struck out on foot toward Fort Quitman. After two days of walking in the hostile desert along the Rio Grande, he finally arrived at the fort and reported the attack to Grierson.

Two months passed with no further reports of renegade sightings. Then, on January 13, 1881, they attacked a stage in Quitman Canyon and killed the driver, a man named Morgan, and a man named Crenshaw, a gambler who was a passenger in the coach. The Apaches mutilated and dismembered the corpses and threw their parts into the nearby rocks.

Major John B. Jones of the Texas Rangers wired Captain George W. Baylor at the Ysleta Ranger Station and ordered him to proceed to the canyon and investigate. Baylor was the son of a United States Army surgeon, born and raised in Indian Territory. He had extensive experience tracking and fighting Apaches. Baylor left Ysleta on January 16 with a detachment of fifteen men and rations for two weeks. He

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stopped at Fort Quitman to obtain directions to the site of the attack.

After examining the site, Baylor picked up the trail of the Apaches and followed it for about twenty-five miles. At one point along the trail one of the soldiers found a kid glove that was identified as having been the gambler's. About a quarter of a mile farther the trail crossed the Rio Grande and proceeded into Mexico. Shortly after crossing the river, Baylor and his men discovered a recent Indian camp. He continued on the trail, and on the second day after leaving Quitman Canyon they discovered another renegade camp in the foothills of the Los Pinos Mountains, not far from the Tres Castillos Mountains.

At the camp the Ranger discovered a horse that had been killed and butchered for food. Another half day's ride and they encountered yet another camp. At this one they found some clothes that were later identified as having belonged to Morgan, the stage driver. At that camp it appeared that three or four more warriors had joined the main group.

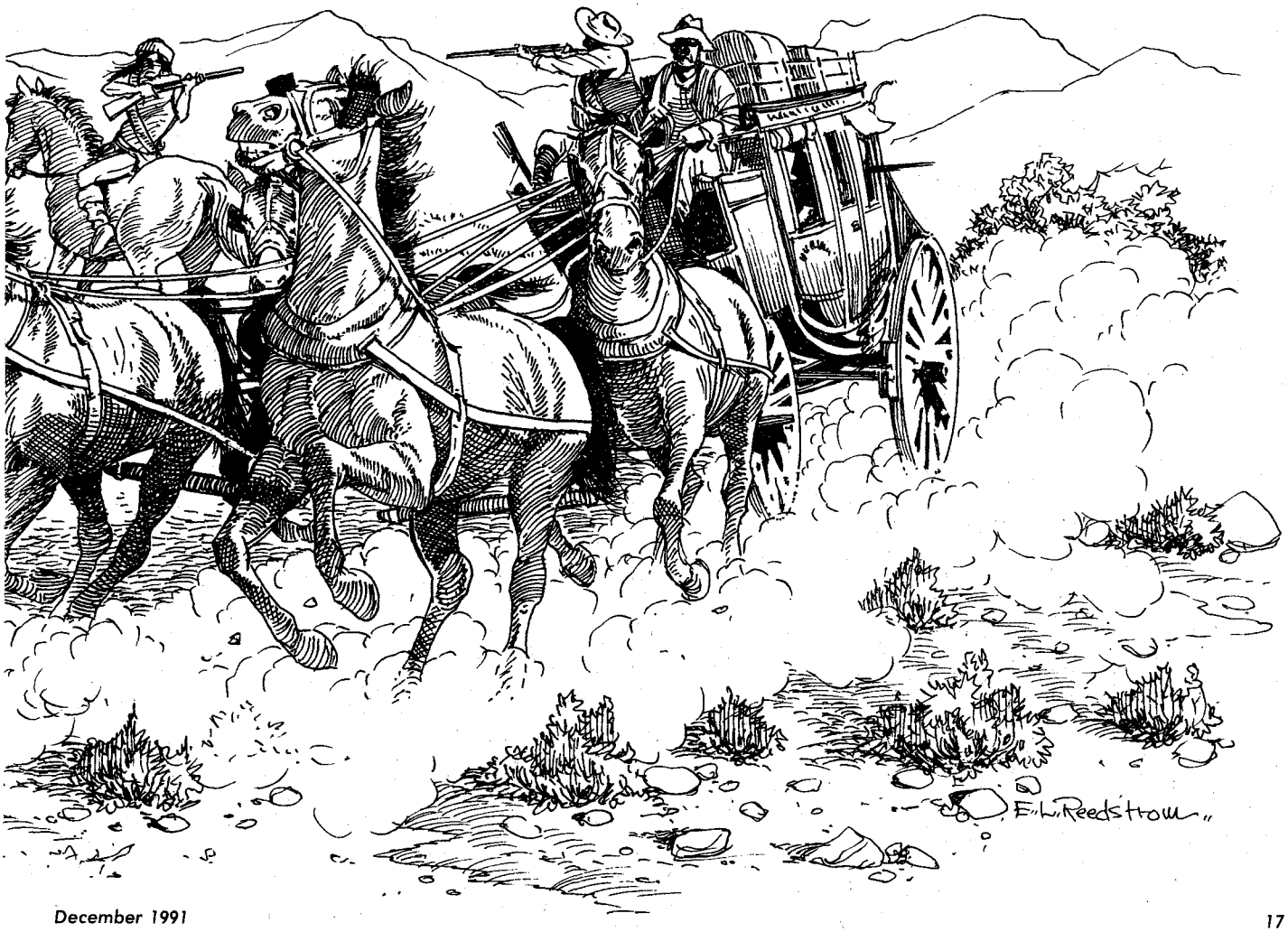
On the next day the trail turned northward and the Rangers followed it back across the Rio Grande and into the United States. The Apaches entered at Bosque Bonita, a wooded floodplain just a few miles upriver from Indian Hot Springs. The trail continued downriver for a few miles and then veered off toward the northeast in the direction of the Eagle Mountains, long one of Victorio's favorite hiding places.

That night Captain Baylor and his detachment made camp within four miles of the mountains. At dawn, following a quick breakfast, they continued to follow the trail into a narrow canyon. Just after they entered the canyon they came upon a camp that had apparently been abandoned only about an hour earlier. The Mescaleros had evidently learned of the approaching Rangers and quickly loaded some of their belongings and fled, leaving several blankets, deer hides, and other camp necessities.

At that site the Rangers found two more horses that had been killed for meat. In fact, there was still a pot of stew boiling over a hastily abandoned campfire. The Rangers also found more clothes belonging to Morgan and Crenshaw as well as some other goods that the Indians had taken in the stage attack.

Because the ground had frozen hard the night before, the Rangers had a difficult time picking up the renegades'

Two months passed with no further reports of renegade sightings. Then, on January 13, 1881, they attacked a stage in Quitman Canyon and killed the driver, a man named Morgan, and a gambler named Crenshaw, who was a passenger. The Apaches dismembered the corpses and threw their parts into the nearby rocks.



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trail. They circled the area several times but could not determine the direction in which the Indians had fled. The Rangers then decided to travel back toward the south, paralleling the western slopes of the Eagle Mountains, circle around the southern end, and then proceed back to the north toward Eagle Springs in the hope of encountering the Indians or at least picking up their trail.

On arriving at Eagle Springs, Baylor encountered Texas Ranger Lieutenant C.L. Neville and his detachment. Neville informed Baylor he had picked up the trail of the Indians six miles east of the springs and that it appeared the Indians were heading toward the Sierra Diablo, twelve miles north.

It was January 24 and Baylor's rations were nearly depleted. Neville's rations were also low, but the two officers agreed to join forces in pursuit of the Mescaleros and share what few supplies each of the detachments possessed. They decided that if they didn't catch up to the Apaches within the next few days, they would return to some nearby settlement and resupply. As they followed the trail, snow began to fall.

The Rangers tracked the Indians slowly and with great difficulty across the plains from the Eagle Mountains to the Sierra Diablo. On entering the Diablo range they encountered a fresh camp and yet another horse that had been killed. By then three inches of snow were on the ground.

The trail of the Indians led toward Chili Peak, a prominent landmark in the area. It was close to evening by the time the Rangers entered the foothills of the mountains, and Baylor was reluctant to engage the Indians in the dark when they had the advantage of high ground. He ordered his men to leave the trail and establish a night camp at Apache Tanks.

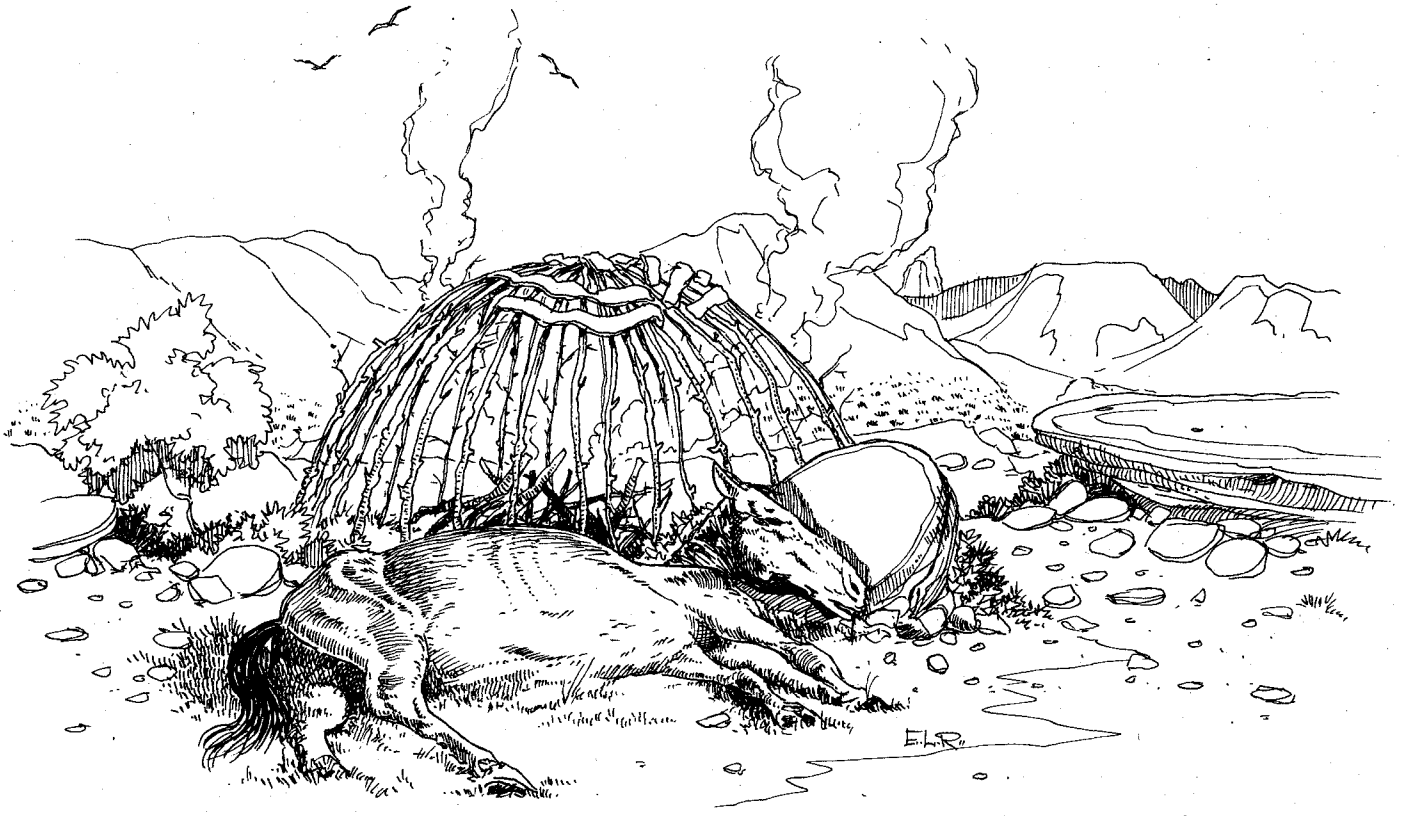
VERY EARLY the next morning the Rangers returned to the trail and followed it to a cliff overlooking Rattlesnake Springs in the Sierra Diablo. The trail led to the edge of the range where the Indians had established another camp. The Rangers were now sleeping only a few hours each night, and they loped their horses during the day in the hope of gaining on the renegades. It was now clear from the sign around the hastily abandoned Indian camp that the Apaches were getting weary of being pursued, that they were not getting enough sleep, and that the women and children were slowing them down.

On the morning of January 28, the Rangers encountered still another camp and another freshly killed horse. The Indians had apparently ripped off a haunch and attempted to broil it over a fire when they had to hurriedly abandon the site. Blood was still dripping from the dead animal when the Rangers arrived. The Rangers had been on short rations for the last few days, but they were exhilarated by the chase and the prospect of a good fight. They were ready and anxious to close in on the Apaches and knew the moment could come at any time.

The Apaches' trail left the Sierra Diablo and led toward the Cornudas Mountains to the northwest, but it appeared that the Indians had a last minute change of mind, for the trail suddenly veered to the east and reentered the same range, leading toward a ridge on the northeast side.

The tracks of the Indian ponies indicated they were tired. From the number of horses and mules that had been killed and eaten, the Rangers knew that many of the Indians were on foot and tired. Baylor estimated they were only two hours behind the renegades. The Rangers made a dry camp in the canyon below the ridge and awaited daylight.

Early on the morning of January 29,



On entering the Diablo range, the Rangers encountered a fresh camp and yet another horse that had been killed. By then three inches of snow were on the ground.

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the Rangers broke camp and rode over the brow of the ridge before the sun came up. They had some trouble picking up the trail of the Indians on the frozen ground and in the dark, but the Pueblo scouts circled the area on their hands and knees until they found sign that the Indians had headed north along the rocky crest.

Moments later, one of the scouts dropped back to the detachment and informed Captain Baylor that the Apaches were camped about a half mile to the north. From where they sat astride their horses, the soldiers could discern the Indians' campfires.

Baylor assigned five of the youngest Rangers to remain behind and guard the horses while the rest of the men silently advanced on foot toward the camp. As they approached they noted that the tribe had split up and established small camps on both sides of the crest.

IT WAS bitterly cold as the Rangers crept along the crest from cover to cover to within one hundred yards of the Indian camps. Just as the sun was rising, Baylor whispered to a Sergeant Carruthers of Neville's command to take seven men and attack the smaller camp on the west side of the crest. Baylor and Neville took the remaining seventeen men and approached the east side. Baylor deployed men to the right and left and told them to await his signal.

A few moments later the Apaches awakened and exited their tepees. At that point Baylor stood up and fired. At the sound, the rest of the Rangers opened fire on the encampment. Those Apaches who survived the initial volley fled for the sanctuary of the rocks with the Rangers chasing them on foot. Totally surprised and unprepared, the Indians offered no resistance.

The Indians that were encamped on the opposite side of the ridge heard the shooting and poured out of their tepees. As soon as they were visible, Carruthers gave the order to fire. Three of the Indians were killed immediately and the rest fled, most of them wounded as they ran. One Apache ran along the crest in full view of the Rangers. As he ran, the Rangers fired hundreds of rounds at him but were unable to bring him down. They pursued him on foot and, while they found some spots of blood along the trail, they never caught up with him.

Three of the women were killed as well as two of the children. The Rangers claimed later that it was difficult to determine the sex and age of the Indians during the excitement of the fight and the dim light of the morning.

Two springs watered the Indians' campground, but the water was bloody from wounded Apaches. Baylor's men headed back to Apache Tanks, about thirty miles away, where there was good water. The only prisoners that returned with the Rangers were a woman and two children. All of the warriors were killed or had escaped.

The Rangers captured seven mules, nine horses, two Winchester rifles, one Remington carbine, one cavalry pistol, one .40 caliber double-action Colt revolver, and six cavalry saddles which had been taken from the cavalry detachment at Indian Hot Springs. All of the Indians' belongings were piled up and burned. The Rangers used the bonfire to cook their breakfast, as they had not eaten since the previous evening. Some of the men ate the renegades' horsemeat and pronounced it delicious.

Two springs watered the Indians' campground, but the water was bloody from wounded Apaches. Baylor ordered the men to pack everything and head back to Apache Tanks, about thirty miles away, where there was good water.

The only prisoners that returned with the Rangers were the surviving woman and two children. All of the warriors were killed or had escaped.

Returning to Eagle Springs at the north end of the Eagle Mountains, Baylor and Neville separated, with Baylor returning to the station at Ysleta and Neville taking the prisoners to the hospital at Fort Davis.

The pursuit of this band, culminating in the brief fight in the Sierra Diablo on January 29, 1881, represents the last stand of the Mescalero Apaches in the state of Texas. With Victorio dead and virtually all of the small bands of renegades eliminated from that part of the Southwest, the fearsome threat of the Mescaleros became a thing of the past.

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The Gold Camp of Foolery E Clampus Vitus

By GARY MEIER

During the California gold rush, and for years afterward, the towns and camps of the Sierra foothills rocked with laughter at the antics of the most curious fraternal society ever devised: The Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampus Vitus, the grandest practical joke ever unleashed on the Mother Lode.

Soon after gold was discovered in the millrace at John Sutter's sawmill on January 24, 1848, tent camps blossomed, then were quickly replaced by the cabins, shanties, and brick and stone buildings that became towns. At the beginning of 1848 there were about 2,000 Americans in California, and by the end of 1849 there were over 53,000. With the great western migration of goldseekers also came the staid and civilized fraternal lodges, such as the Masons and the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, often occupying the first permanent structures in the diggings.

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The members of E Clampus Vitus came mostly from the placer diggings, such as this one on the American River.

The members of these respected orders were chiefly business and professional people—bankers, lawyers, doctors, men in the mercantile and hotel trades—and some of the more gentlemanly miners. However, many of the men in the diggings were too free-spirited, boisterous, or crude to be welcomed into the established lodges. They were outside the accepted circle, destined to drink alone, undignified and unentitled. But that soon changed, for in the throngs descending upon the Mother Lode was one Joseph H. Zumwalt, whose trunk contained a document that would have momentous impact on the forty-niners. It was an eight-page tract describing the initiation ritual and rules of a peculiar secret society called E Clampus Vitus.

It is believed that E Clampus Vitus started as an elaborate practical joke in the hills of western Virginia in the mid-1840s. Actually, the original name was E *Clampsus* Vitus, but along the way the extra "s" was dropped. Joe Zumwalt unpacked the ritual booklet with his other gear when he reached Hangtown (now Placerville) in 1850. E Clampus Vitus had come to California.

Zumwalt attempted to organize the first ECV chapter in Hangtown. That lodge was short-lived, perhaps due to a half-hearted try by the frustrated Zumwalt, who was having little luck finding gold. Then he moved forty miles south to the Mokelumne Hill district, where he found richer diggings. He also discovered that the prank-loving, recreation-hungry miners of Mok Hill were ready to embrace his intriguingly absurd lodge. So in September 1851, Mokelumne Hill Lodge No. 1001, An-

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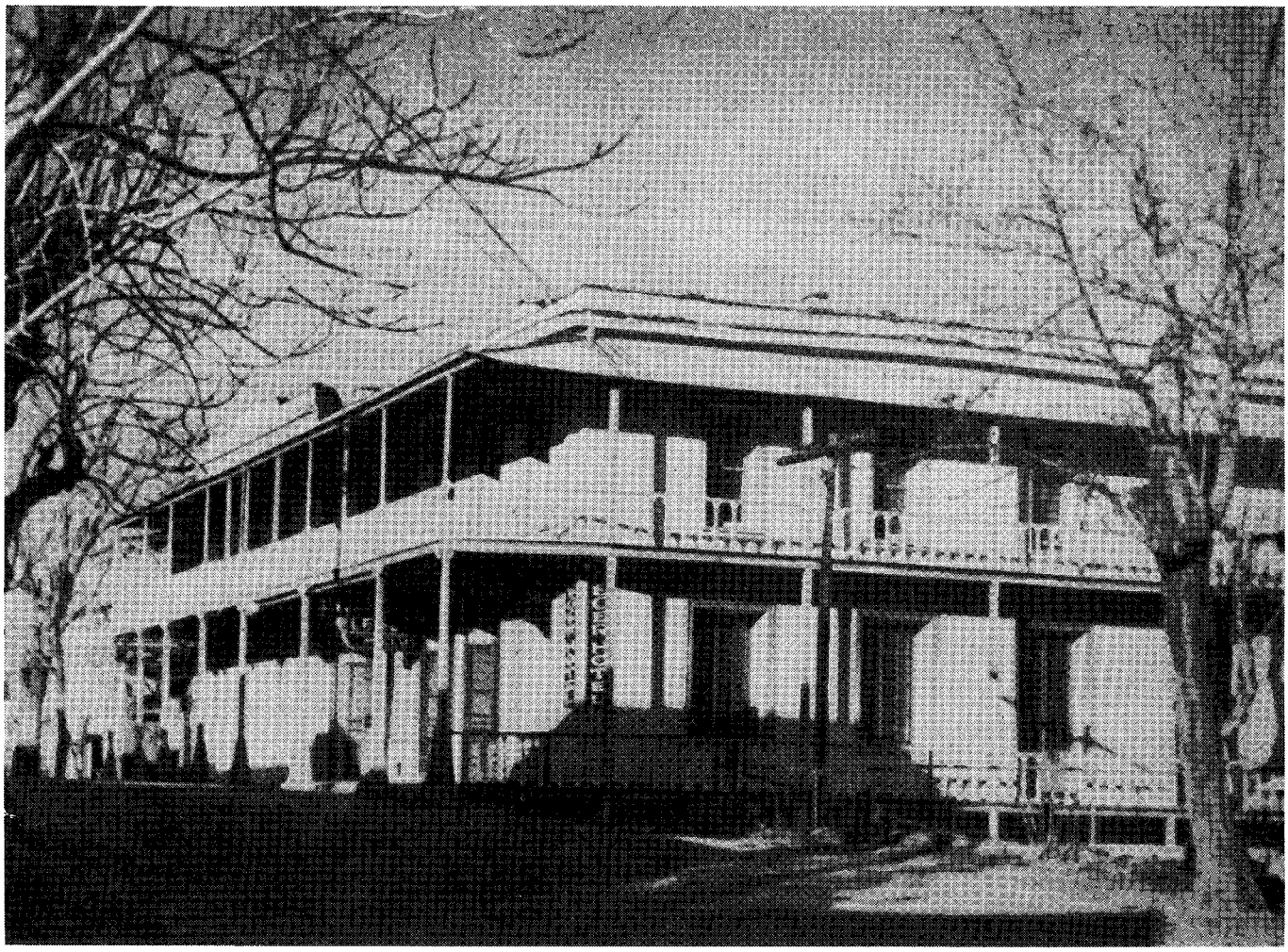

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George Leger's hotel, built in 1854, hosted Clamper meetings as a Hall of Comparative Ovations in Mokelumne Hill.

cient and Honorable Order of E Clampus Vitus was born.

Though it would later show a truly benevolent side, the chief aim of E Clampus Vitus at its beginning was simply to poke good-natured fun at the serious mystical lodges, particularly the Masons and the Odd Fellows, whose complex internal structures the irreverent prankish group gleefully parodied.

The exalted ruler of the "Clampers," as the members were called, was a mock-stern official known as the Noble Grand Humbug. He was assisted by the Clamps Petrix, the Clamps Matrix, the Royal Platrix, the Grand Gyascutis, and the Grand Iscutis. In fact, every Clamper had a title of some sort, and all were held in equal indignity by their fellows. The ritual greeting between Clampers, according to E Clampus Vitus historian Carl I. Wheat, was the "raising of both hands to the ears, with thumbs against ears and fingers extended." The reply was a closed right fist, with arm raised from the beltline, striking the chest forcibly.

Everything about E Clampus Vitus was in jest, a philosophy embodied in the Clamper motto, *Credo Quia Absurdium*—take nothing seriously unless it is absurd. Even the name of the Order was a humbug, for E Clampus Vitus has no meaning in true Latin. The high-spirited miners loved it, for they belonged. Their mascot was a decorated billy goat, and their banner was a hoop skirt, to which they attached the words, *This is the flag we fight under.* In parades they carried a seven-foot-long Sword of Justice and Mercy, and they toted an equally long "Blunderbusket," with a two-inch bore.

Pranks and practical jokes abounded, finding victims in members and nonmembers alike. Soon Joe Zumwalt's Mokelumne Hill lodge of parody caught on in other camps, and within a few years ECV chapters had sprung up throughout California's gold country, from Yreka in the north to the southern outpost of Mariposa. In 1855, even Hangtown (by then called Placerville) relented.

Clamper meetings were held in the Hall of Comparative Ovations, commonly the back room of a saloon. They also met in hotels, dance halls, and if the attendance were too large, in barns. Some chapters even constructed their own Hall of Comparative Ovations building. But mostly they met in, as one newspaper put it, "libation emporiums, where they reached stages of well-being, free of pain and distress."

The brethren were called together by the tinny braying of the "hewgag," a big horn sounded in the street by the Royal Grand Musician. Strict Clamper rules required meetings to be held "at any time before or after a full moon."

Much Clamper business involved taking in new members, called Poor Blind Candidates, and they were really "taken in." The only requirement for membership was a poke of gold dust. The amount depended upon the candidate's means, and in some cases it was waived entirely.

Whenever a new member was to be inducted, the hewgag brayed and the brothers headed for the Hall of Comparative Ovations. After all were

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assembled, the Noble Grand Humbug, the Clamps Petrix, and the Clamps Matrix, all masked, began the solemn ritual of initiation, complete with elaborate phony Latin phrasing. The Poor Blind Candidate—right shoe off, pants leg rolled up, and wearing a blindfold—was then led into the hall and brought before the Noble Grand Humbug. His Eminence would ask the nervous candidate a series of questions, after which the newcomer was led around the hall, stopping at different points where he was lectured on various Clamper policies and rules. Next he was placed in the Expungent's Chair, a wheelbarrow padded with a large, cold, wet sponge, and taken over the Rocky Road to Dublin, a ladder laid on the floor. As the Poor Blind Candidate bounced over the rungs, the brethren sang out repeatedly, "Ain't you glad to get out of the wilderness, get out of the wilderness, get out of the wilderness."

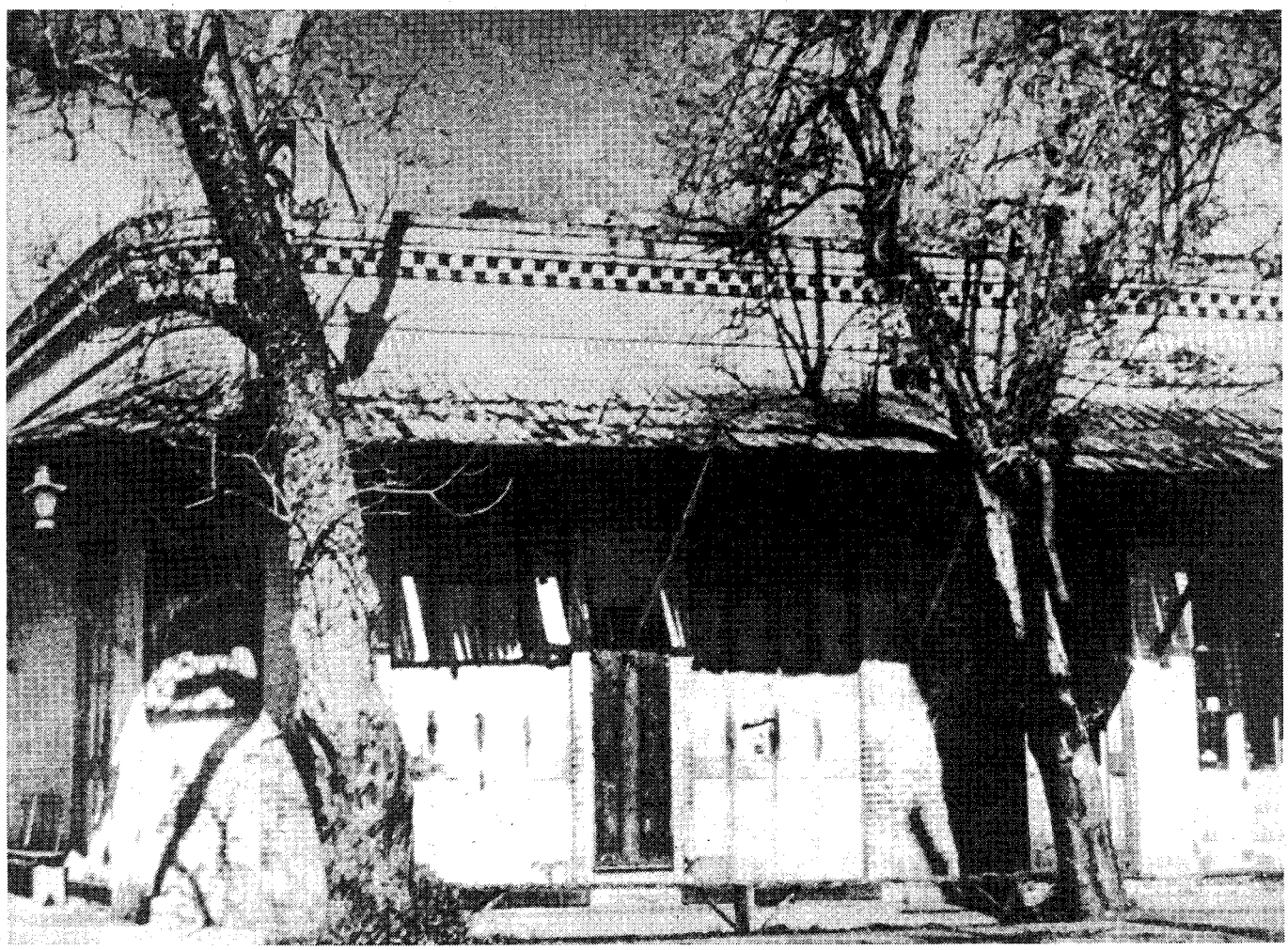
Upon completion of his "soul cleansing" ride, the initiate was asked if he believed in the Elevation of Man. When he said he did, he was immediately lifted onto a saddle and hoisted by block and tackle to the ceiling. Often the "elevation" was accomplished by a blanket toss, where the candidate was bounced on a blanket that the brethren firmly held on all sides.

Finally, sometimes after several hours of good-natured torture, the Scales of Darkness—the blindfold—was removed from the fledgling member, and he was given the sacred Staff of Relief. Meanwhile, his new comrades sang to him the revered Clamper ode, "We'll take a drink with you, Dear Brother." And was he ready for one! After surviving the ritual ceremony, the new member was immediately appointed Chairman of the Most Important Committee to instill a Clamper sense of self-esteem. With his new title he equaled all his brothers in rank.

The Noble Grand Humbug then completed the rite by explaining the importance of the Order's Clampatron, St. Vitus, and the significance of the Clamper sacred emblem, the Staff of Relief. He closed by asking the ritual question, "What say the Brethren?" To which the enthusiastic reply was "Satisfactory!" The initiation was over.

There were no dues in E Clampus Vitus, and often the treasury consisted only of the initiation fee put up by the evening's inductee, which was immediately converted into liquid assets for the refreshment of the assemblage. Because the Hall of Comparative Ovations was usually a saloon, the barkeeper often had the drinks dispensed before the Scales of Darkness came off the Poor Blind Candidate.

In Mokelumne Hill, where it all started, Van Pelt's saloon served as a Hall of Comparative Ovations until George Leger became a Clamper and opened his hotel to the braying of the hewgag. In Ione, Ringer's saloon was where the Clampers met. In Amador City it was Mooney's, and in Georgetown, Clamper-saloonkeeper Pat Lynch hosted the raucous meetings. The Noble Grand Humbug E.H. Van Decor presided over the Georgetown



Author's Collection

Columbia's Stage Drivers' Retreat saloon, built in 1854, served as a Hall of Comparative Ovations. The checkered cornice design was unique in the Mother Lode. Photo circa 1929.

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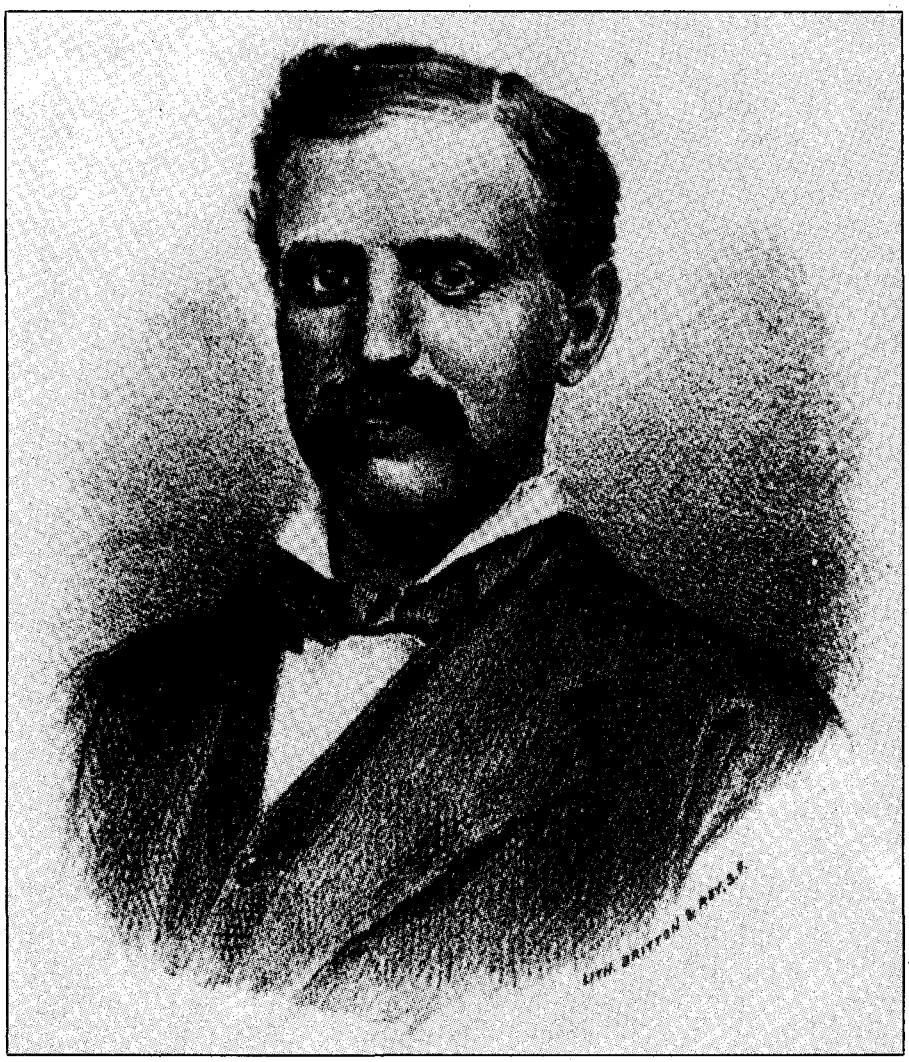
gatherings in 1856 until a fire swept away that sacred Hall and most of the town. Stevens' Young America Saloon in Jackson was a Hall of Comparative Ovations and Al Dudley was the Noble Grand Humbug in 1861. In the booming gold rush town of Columbia there were two Clamper Halls in the 1850s: Soderer and Marshall's drinking emporium, later called the Stage Driver's Retreat, and Albert Aberdeen's saloon, where the Clampers met downstairs in Darling's Oyster Parlor.

AS THE popularity of E Clampus Vitus grew, Clamper lodges formed in nearly every town in the California mining districts. Many community leaders and business owners found it to their advantage to join the order and follow the bray of the hewgag, for Clampers were loyal and tended to vote for their brothers and trade in Clamper-owned establishments. Besides, there was refreshing if ironic honesty in the Clamper philosophy. By the mid-1850s, E Clampus Vitus numbered among its brethren such worthies as judges, senators, state assemblymen, newspapermen, sheriffs, bankers, and mayors, as well as scores of lawyers and doctors.

When E Clampus Vitus was in full bloom, from the mid-1850s to about 1870, it was not unusual to find towns almost closing down at the call of the hewgag. Shops, banks, saloons, homes—and placer diggings—were temporarily abandoned when the summons of the sacred clarion shattered the stillness of the air. Indeed many mining towns in the Mother Lode, such as Downieville, Placerville, and Sierra City, had more Clampers in residence than all the members of the serious lodges combined. Over the years, the secret Clamper grip passed between thousands of hands, even extending over the Sierras in 1859 to Nevada's Comstock Lode silver mines.

An example of the fact that it paid to be a Clamper is the case of Lord Sholto Douglas. Lord Sholto, the head of a small traveling theatrical company, scheduled a two-night stand in Marysville. Unfortunately, the opening performance produced only seventy dollars in receipts, which would not even cover expenses, and Lord Sholto decided to cancel the next night's show and leave town. However, after that dismal first evening he met a Clamper, who saw an opportunity to help the dejected, likable actor, as well as to bring a British peer into the fold.

The Marysville *Appeal* announced that, "Last night after the performance at the theater, the sonorous tones of the Hewgag floating over the city warned all good Clampers that a stranger was to be initiated into their order. Presently 500 men had assembled within the walls of the Hall to witness the ceremony of the initiation. The Clamp Petrix announced that he who sought admittance was no less a personage than Lord Sholto Douglas. When he had been blindfolded, the shoe removed from his right foot and the pants-leg rolled to the right knee, the work of introducing him to the mysteries of the order was begun."



Author's Collection

Hotel proprietor Albert Dudley was the Noble Grand Humbug of Jackson Lodge, E Clampus Vitus, in the 1860s.

Attendance at the second performance was quite different, for now heading the little company of actors was Lord Sholto Douglas of E Clampus Vitus. The theater was filled, and the songs, dances, and skits met with roars of "Satisfactory!" Lord Sholto was a success in Marysville.

Some of the enlightened, having had the Scales of Darkness removed in the Hall of Comparative Ovations, were names not lost to history. Philip D. Armour, the Auburn and Placerville butcher who would later found one of the world's largest meat-packing firms, was a Clamper, as was John Mohler Studebaker, who made wheelbarrows for Mother Lode miners in the 1850s. When he had saved enough money, Studebaker joined his brothers in their Indiana wagon shop and lived to manufacture the first gasoline-powered Studebaker auto in 1904. John Hume, lawyer, well-known state assemblyman, and brother of famed Wells, Fargo Chief Detective James Hume, was a member of E Clampus Vitus' Placerville and Coloma lodges.

Also a young newspaperman named Sam Clemens, who lived for a time at the Jackass Hill diggings near Angels Camp, was a brother of E Clampus Vitus. There, on a cold January day in 1865, the fun-loving journalist heard someone relate a funny anecdote about a frog-jumping contest. A few months later, Mark Twain wrote *The Celebrated*

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Jumping Frog of Calaveras County and found fame overnight.

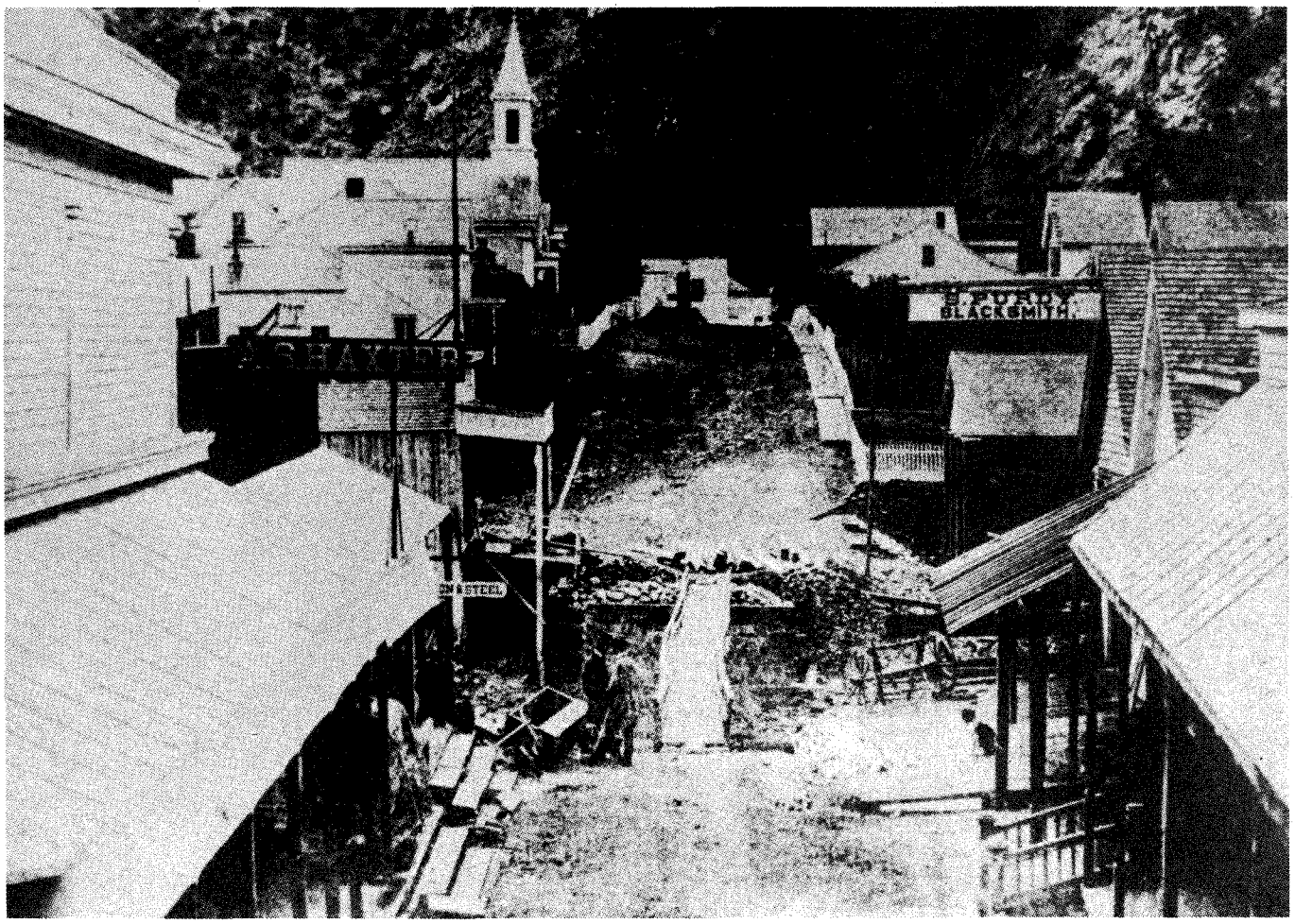
The Clampers also claimed Ulysses S. Grant, J. Pierpont Morgan, Horace Greeley, and Horatio Alger as members. All of those historic figures visited the California gold country, but it is doubtful that they were ever really Clampers. Some Clamper membership claims are certainly suspect, such as Solomon, the Ceasars, Henry VIII, Sir Francis Drake, George Washington, Andrew Jackson, and even Adam himself, the alleged first Clampatriarch.

Sometimes when the hewgag brayed it was not for the initiation of a Poor Blind Candidate, but the planning of an intricate practical joke. In the Mother Lode town of Sonora, a lawyer named Otis Greenwood was the prankish Noble Grand Humbug. Greenwood and his brother Clampers had taken note of a stranger in town, a foppish little strutting peacock named Garland, who fancied himself an actor and ladies man. He had followed a theatrical troupe to Sonora from Stockton, where he had been pressing his unwanted affections on one of the actresses. When the Sonora Clampers learned of Garland's continuing boorish advances toward the lady, they decided something had to be done. Greenwood had the Royal Grand Musician sound the hewgag, and they devised a plan.

Soon, a committee of jovial men in frock coats and tall hats met with Garland and told him it was their duty and pleasure to welcome visitors to the city. With tongue loosened by strong drink, the dandy confided in his new friends his intention to join the theatrical company and thereby press his attentions even harder on the actress, who had so far spurned him. The problem was, Garland said, no one in the troupe liked him, and he was finding it impossible to gain their favor.

The committee of "welcomers" sympathized with him and suggested a solution. He should put himself in their hands, they said, for sure success with the troupe and the actress. They told him that if he could do something to garner community approval and recognition, the acting company—including the girl—would see him in a new, shining light. So on the evening of the first performance, on a raised platform to the side of the audience, sat the proud popinjay, splendidly decorated, courtesy of the Sonora Lodge, E Clampus Vitus. He wore a big wooden sword at his side, a magnificent paper hat, and across his chest was fastened the Badge of Honor, a large blue wooden heart with gold letters in true Clamper hog-Latin, signifying nothing. Behind the "honored guest" sat several of the brethren, wearing smaller swords and badges, keeping their faces solemn and dignified. The chuckles and amused looks of the audience were lost on Garland, as were the stifled giggles of the stage players when the curtain went up.

After the performance, the brothers led the resplendent but foolish fop in a parade up the main street, with the entire audience in tow. Greenwood stopped the march at the Placer Hotel steps and introduced the Honorable Mr. Garland to Sonora, while a dozen Clampers in the crowd called for a



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In the Mother Lode boomtown of Downieville, circa 1861, E Clampus Vitus members outnumbered the combined memberships of all the serious lodges.

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speech. Before he could speak, however, he was given a bracer of whiskey, laced with a dollop of croton oil, a strong cathartic. Within minutes he bounded off the steps and disappeared.

Garland remained in bed for several days, and the theatrical troupe moved on. Before he was ready to board the stage going in the opposite direction, the sympathetic brethren gave him a phoney plaque and told him to guard it forever. They said that if he showed it to any Clampers anywhere, it would be their solemn duty to take him in—just as the Sonora Lodge had done.

On another occasion, a Poor Blind Candidate named Adams in Sierra City made the mistake of arguing with one of his initiators. After the ceremony was over, some of the brethren planned a little prank for him. They appointed Adams Chief Gold Mover and assigned him the task of taking $5,000 in Clamper gold coins to the bank in Marysville, where the boys kept an account. They told him that arrangements had already been made with the bank and all he had to do was get it there safely. The Clampers showed him the strongbox, which appeared to contain coin rolls, and broke one open to reveal twenty-dollar gold double eagles. Adams vowed he would get the treasure safely to the bank.

THE NEXT DAY Adams and the strongbox were on the Marysville stage. When the coach reached the busy city, the Chief Gold Mover, swelled with self-importance, carried the heavy box into the bank and announced loudly that he had just brought down the Clamper money from Sierra City, and that he had done it alone. However, when the banker opened the box Adams was shocked to find that all he had brought in for deposit was a box full of stove bolts.

Perhaps the Mother Lode's greatest hoax was a humbug known to the world as the "Pliocene Skull," and though never proved, many historians are convinced it was perpetrated by those who heeded the call of the hewgag. In 1866, from a mine near Angels Camp, a human skull was taken and presented to the scientific world as that of a previously undiscovered type of prehistoric man. Anthropologists argued for almost fifty years over the authenticity of the find, but finally decided that the famous skull was from an Indian and had been placed in the mine shaft as an ambitious—and successful—practical joke. E Clampus Vitus remained the chief suspect, but no public admissions were ever made.

Armour and Company Photo

Philip D. Armour, E Clampus Vitus, was a Placerville butcher who later established one of the largest meat packing empires in the world.

In its lapses from buffoonery the Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampus Vitus showed a truly benevolent side. Frequently, and quietly, the brethren performed charitable acts, and though they would whimsically state that the purpose of their society was to "care for widows and orphans, particularly the widows," the ECV was widely lauded for valuable services to the needy. They sponsored benefit shows and other fund-raising events for the sick and the destitute, with no hoaxes involved. And when the Mother Lode was struck with disaster, such as fires and floods that devastated whole towns, the Clampers were among the first to lend a hand with rescues and rebuilding. They were jokesters, but good citizens as well.

The strength and spirit of E Clampus Vitus began fading by the 1890s as the miners drifted away. The last Clamper meeting in Sierra City was in 1907, and the hewgag brayed for the last time at Quincy in 1916.

However, Carl I. Wheat, Dr. Charles Lewis Camp, and others in the California Historical Society revived the order in 1931. Today there are a number of E Clampus Vitus chapters in California, existing to have fun, recount gold rush lore, and place plaques at historic sites. Some of the crumbling, long-abandoned saloons are still there too—former Halls of Comparative Ovations, where in the heyday of the Mother Lode the ritual question, "What say the brethren?" was always answered with a roaring, "Satisfactory!"

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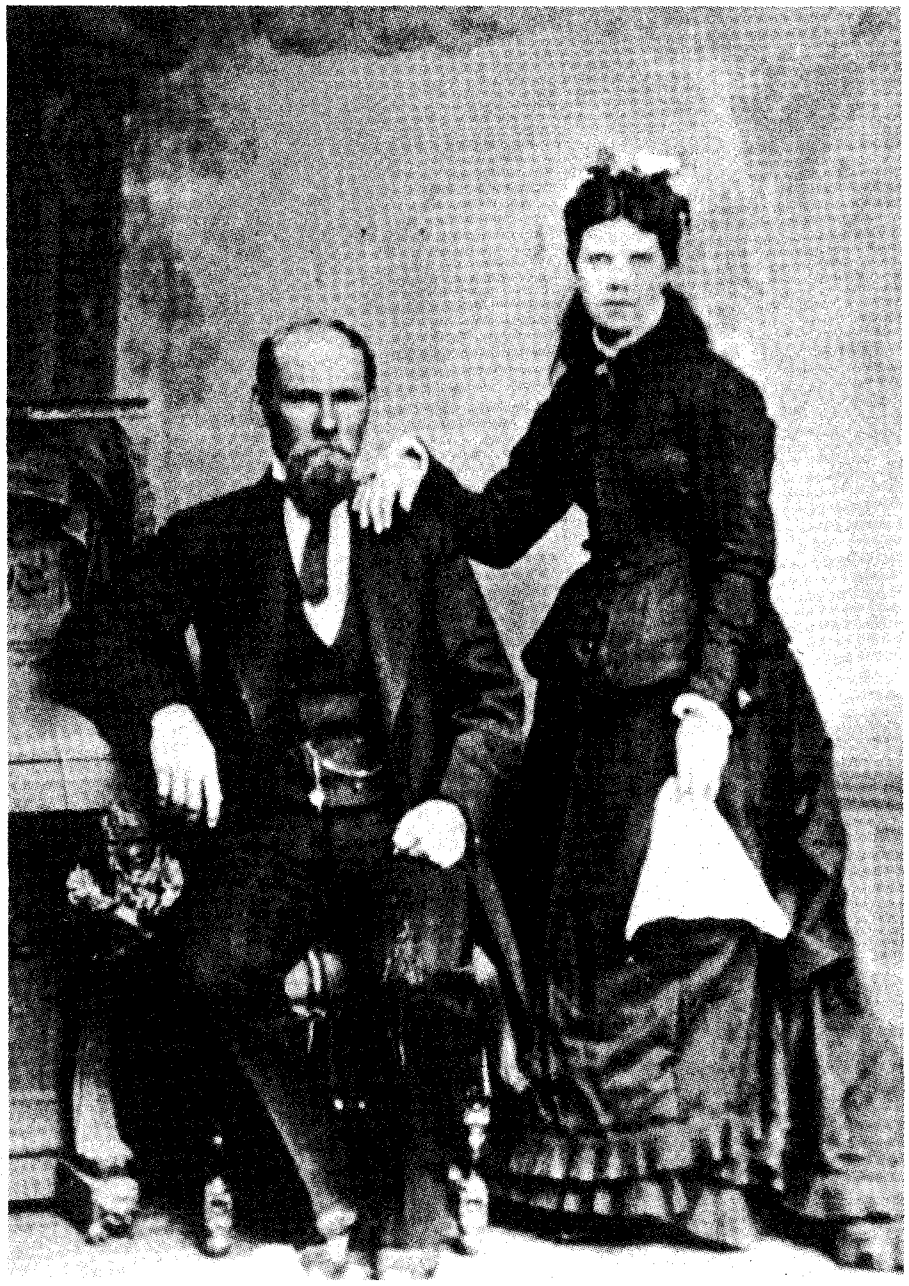
The Ar of B

By MARY G. STANO



Grounds Family Photo

Wedding photo of Bud and Melissa Grounds.

William F. "Bud" Grounds first saw the northwestern rangeland of Arizona Territory in the fall of 1870. He was returning to his home in Texas, after helping deliver 1,200 head of steers to California, when he came upon Truxton Springs Canyon. At the very core of the canyon was a stream travelers had used since 1775 and beyond that was a stretch of land Grounds considered ideal for grazing. He decided that was the place he wanted to raise his own cattle. Little did he know it would become the greatest challenge of his life.

Bud Grounds was born in Salem, Arkansas, on September 16, 1851. His parents died when he was quite young, and he lived with his older sister Rebecca until she died of yellow fever in 1861. Shortly after the funeral he and his younger sister Julia went to live with their uncle, William "Doc" Grounds (so named for his skill in healing sick animals), in Palo Pinto County, Texas. There he met Charles Goodnight, a friend and neighbor of Doc's.

Goodnight was impressed with how fast Bud Grounds learned to handle a horse and work cattle. Always in need of good drovers, Goodnight and partner Oliver Loving hired the fifteen-year-old boy to help drive 2,000 head of cattle to the Colorado goldfields. The drive began on June 6, 1866, but they did not take the more familiar Chisholm Trail north. Because of Kiowa and Comanche attacks on the northern route, Goodnight and Loving opted for a westerly one through New Mexico Territory—a trail that became known as the Goodnight-Loving Trail.

The route Goodnight and Loving chose crossed more than eighty miles of waterless desert. The new course was nothing but countless miles of poor feed and dust. Cattle too thirsty and exhausted to continue simply dropped and were left to rot in the sun. The water stored in large barrels for the men was nearly gone. Then the cattle caught a whiff of the Pecos River twelve miles away and stampeded. Grounds did his best to help slow the cattle, but the animals were crazed with thirst and charged across the parched land, leaping headlong over a six-foot bank. Once the dust cleared, Grounds found 300 head of cattle either trampled to death or bogged down in quicksand.

The remaining cattle were driven to Fort Sumner in New Mexico Territory, where the army purchased over 1,000 head for Indians at the Bosque Redondo Reservation. While Loving continued on to Colorado to deliver the rest of the cattle, a chore that required only a few of the drovers, Goodnight and Grounds returned to Texas. Upon his return home the impressionable youth talked endlessly about the Apache and Navaho Indians he had seen at the reservation; thousands of starving men, women, and children were forced to eat their own horses because of unscrupulous practices by the very Indian agents hired to help them. It was something he would vividly recall in later years when the same practice occurred near his own ranch, with dire consequences.

Grounds joined Goodnight and Loving on several more cattle drives until 1870 when friend and neighbor Jack Cureton asked him to deliver 1,200 head to California. Upon his return from that trip, he informed his uncle of his deci-

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izona Challenge ud Grounds

sion to take his share of the family cattle and settle at Truxton Springs Canyon, where the grama grass and white sage grew thick in the draws. With the help of several young men, including Jack Cureton's sons, Jim and John, Grounds drove 800 head of cattle and twenty-five horses to the northwestern canyons of Arizona Territory.

By 1873 Bud Grounds had a sturdy stone cabin near Truxton Springs and a sizable cattle herd. The Walapai Indians, whose lands he now occupied, were not a threat to him. The army had taken control of the region the same year he had arrived, and the tribe was peacefully settled at Camp Beale Springs, which was a safe thirty-six miles from his ranch. But like the Indians at Bosque Redondo, the Walapai Indians were being starved to death. They claimed the Indian agent was selling their rations to nearby towns to supplement his income, and they demanded the military commander, Captain Thomas Byrne, do something about it. When nothing was done by February 1874 the Walapai Indians left the military camp and returned to the hunting grounds.

But what had once been the Walapais' hunting and gathering grounds were now mining claims and cattle ranches. With no place to call their own, they camped on ranchland owned by men like Grounds and stole what livestock they came upon. In a short time Grounds lost over one hundred head of cattle and several horses.

Uncertain as to what the Indians were apt to do if conditions worsened, and with losses mounting, Grounds rode to Camp Beale Springs to seek military help from Captain Byrne. Although Byrne understood the ranchers' fear,

Loren Wilson Photo

Ruins believed to have been Bud Grounds' stone cabin near Truxton Springs.

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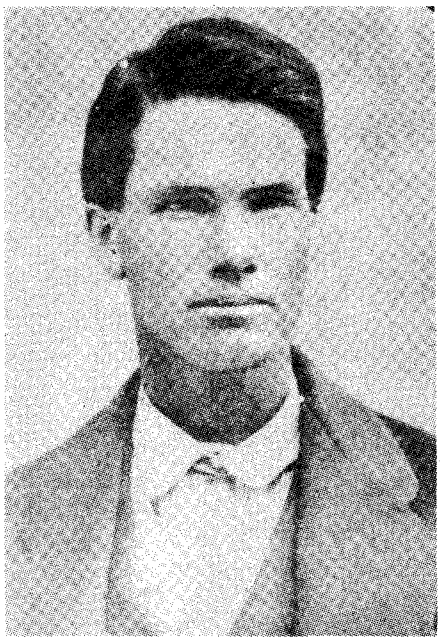
and sympathized with their losses, he could not spare a single man. He needed every soldier to bring the Walapai Indians back to camp. The best Byrne could offer Grounds was a few rifles and some ammunition.

With thousands of head of cattle to guard over a vast range of land, Grounds needed more than what Byrne had given him. He immediately rode to the town of Mineral Park, about twenty miles north of Camp Beale Springs, and hired an additional three men. But even the extra manpower did not stop the Indians from stealing his cattle. On February 21, 1874, after several days of snow and freezing rain, the men rode out to check on the cattle and found many slaughtered.

Grounds and John Cureton rode out together and discovered an abandoned Indian camp. After tallying the number of butchered steers scattered about they rode on and came upon a Walapai Indian they knew as Wildcat. Because the Indian was a military scout, he was armed with a Sharps rifle and forty cartridges. Although none of the Indian scouts gave any of the ranchers trouble, Grounds was suspicious of the way Wildcat slowly approached them.

"Don't shoot," Grounds shouted as the Indian took aim. According to an article in the *Arizona Weekly Miner*, the Indian "tried to fire, but, for some reason the gun did not go off." Cureton managed to get a shot off before the Indian's weapon fired. Cureton took a bullet in the leg, another in the arm, and fell from his mount. The Indian shot Grounds' horse in the jaw before Grounds dropped him.



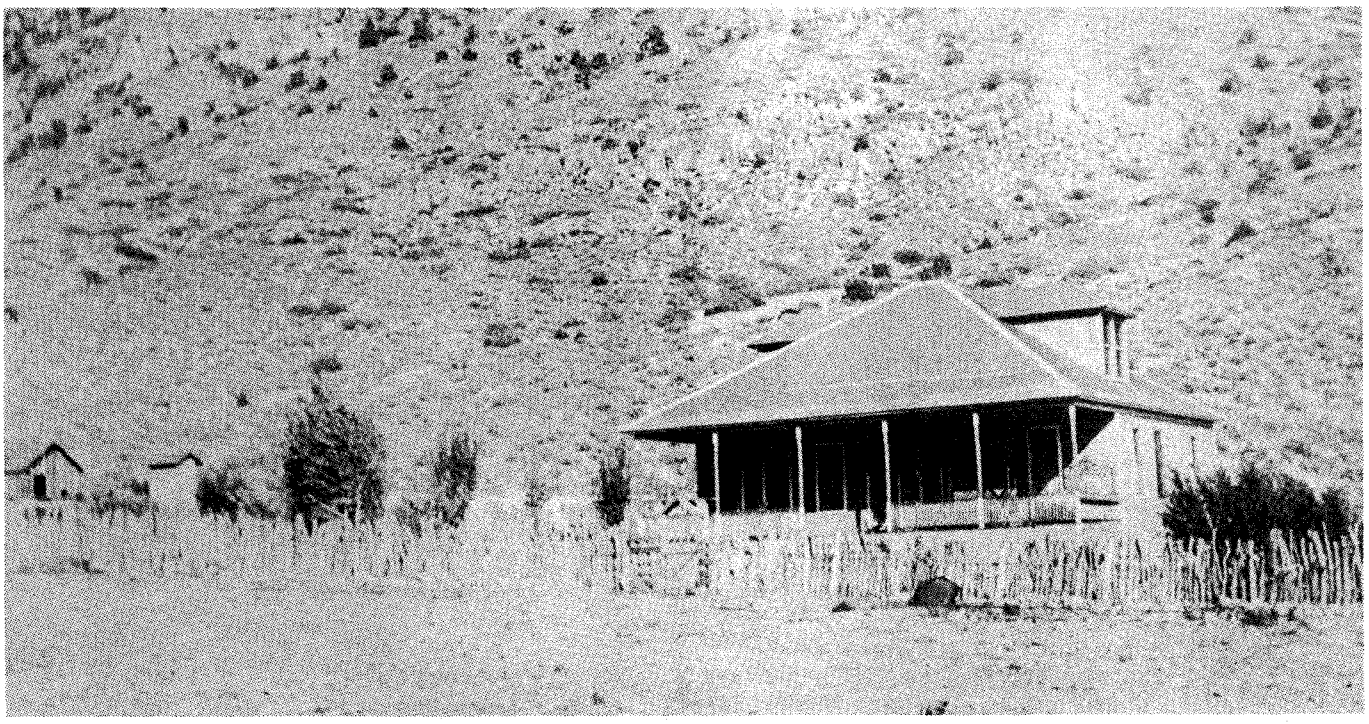
Grounds Family Photo

John Cureton (date unknown).

Cureton insisted he be left behind until a wagon could be brought back for him, but Grounds refused. After he stanched the flow of blood from Cureton's wounds with wads of torn cloth, he stripped the dead Indian of his rifle, ammunition, and a knife. He then tied Cureton to his horse and took him to the nearby town of Cerbat. There was no doctor there and Grounds and Jim Cureton loaded the wounded man into a buckboard and took him to Prescott. It was a trip of over 100 miles and Cureton spent it in a delirious state.

By the time the Curetons and Grounds reached Prescott, John's arm and leg were swollen to twice their normal size. Because Grounds had pressed the wads of cloth into the wounds, extensive tissue damage had occurred. The doctor feared gangrene and informed the men he would have to amputate. According to grandson John Cureton Grounds, Bud Grounds placed his hand upon the doctor's shoulder and told him, "We want this man to live a thousand times more than you do, and all we can say is do your best without amputation and spare nothing that might save his life." The doctor held off on the amputation, and the swelling went down. In a few weeks John Cureton was back working the Truxton Springs range.

The Walapai Indians, which the army hunted until they were too tired and hungry to resist, returned to Camp Beale Springs in March 1874. Grounds had lost 356 beef cattle, 106 cows, and seven horses to them. As soon as the Indians were on the reservation at La Paz, along the Colorado River, Grounds applied for compensation from the government. He claimed the Department of In-



Grounds Family Photo

The Grounds house at Claysprings.

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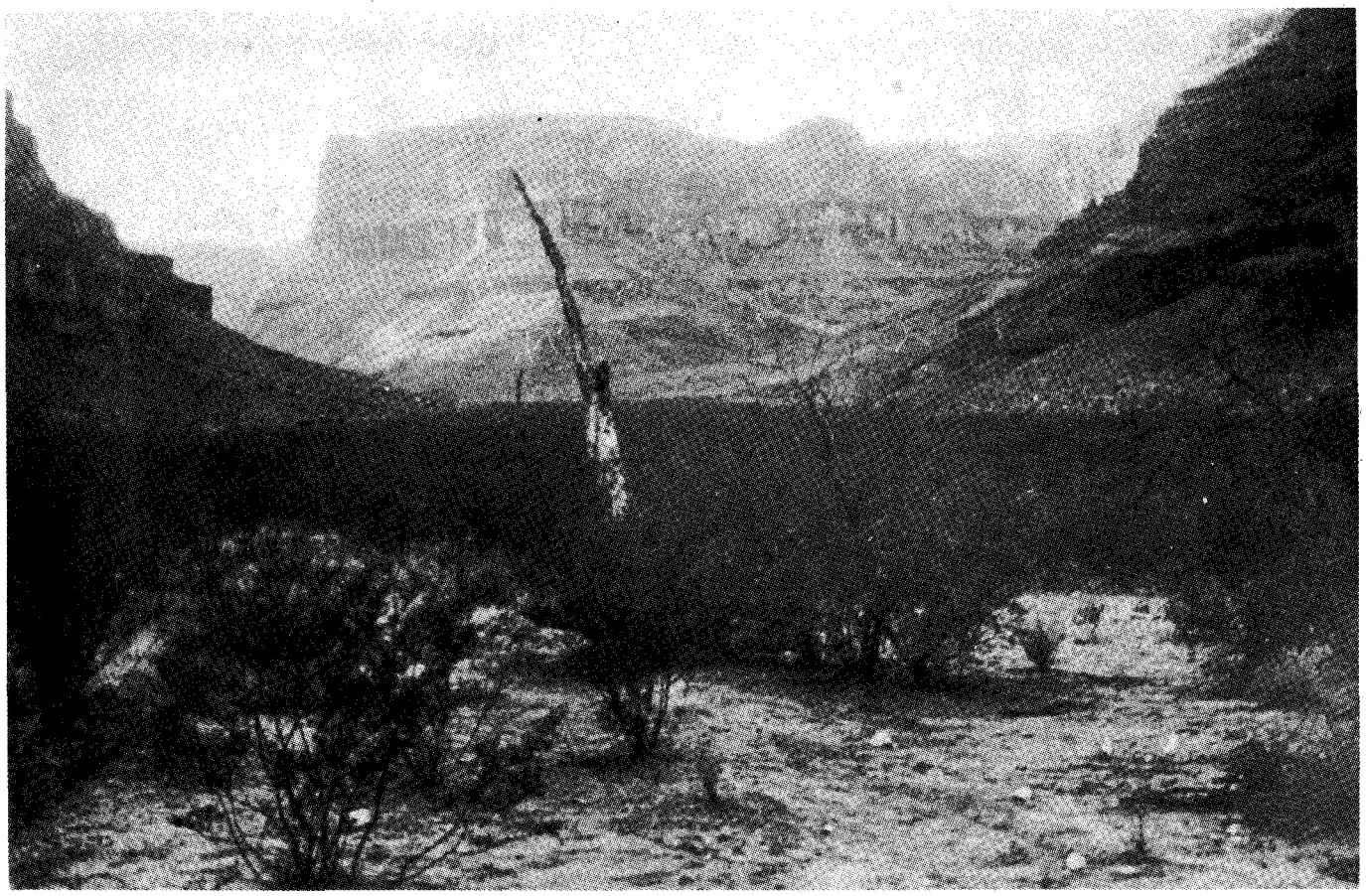

Loren Wilson Photo

Meriwitica Canyon, where Grounds had his garden.

dian Affairs had been negligent in handling the Walapais' welfare and was responsible for his losses, but it was eight years before the government was even willing to listen to him. In the meantime, the Walapais left the reservation at La Paz after only a year and returned to their homeland.

Two years later Bud Grounds married Melissa Cureton, sister of Jim and John, at the Palace Hotel in San Francisco. He brought her to Truxton Springs believing it to be safe, but hatred of whites still ran deep in some Walapais.

In June 1878 a Walapai Indian rode to Jim and John Cureton's home a few miles from the Grounds home. The men were out on the range, leaving only two women to face a man who had been drinking heavily. The Walapai drew a pistol and threatened to shoot them if they did not give him food. After convincing him they had nothing to give, he rode out and returned the next day to find one of the Cureton brothers butchering a cow. He again demanded some food. When Cureton refused to give him anything, the Indian attacked him with a stick, as his pistol apparently had no bullets. Cureton slipped a knife out and slit the Indian's abdomen.

As the Walapais became more belligerent, Grounds decided to relocate his family, which then included a son, Ila, and a daughter, Julia Dora, to Mineral Park. While there he discovered a silver mine. When mining appeared more profitable than raising cattle, Grounds sold his ranch and concentrated on his Lone Star Mine. But when ore processing proved too costly and time consuming (the ore had to be shipped to Swansea, Wales) he sold the mine and went into the mercantile business.

Uncertain as to what the Indians were apt to do if conditions worsened, and with losses mounting, Grounds rode to Camp Beale Springs to seek military help from Captain Byrne. Although Byrne understood the ranchers' fear and sympathized with their losses, he could not spare a single man.

Although Grounds was successful as a merchant, he found mining to be more lucrative, as mills to process the ore were beginning to be built in the region. He purchased several mining claims in the Claysprings area, located north of Truxton Canyon, and moved his family there. He built a frame house with the help of friend and fellow miner Jack Cole and planted a garden several miles away.

The garden was in a lush area of nearby Meriwitica Canyon, used by Indians for centuries. Because it was a considerable distance from the ranch house, it was not always well-tended.

Around 1882, while Grounds and Cole were cleaning out the vegetables that had gone bad, a small band of Walapai Indians rode up. They found some of the discarded vegetables in the road and asked if they could have them. Although the men told the Walapais the vegetables were not edible, the hungry Indians persisted until Grounds told them they could take what they wanted. The Indians gathered the spoiled vegetables and took them back to their camp.

During the night the Grounds family

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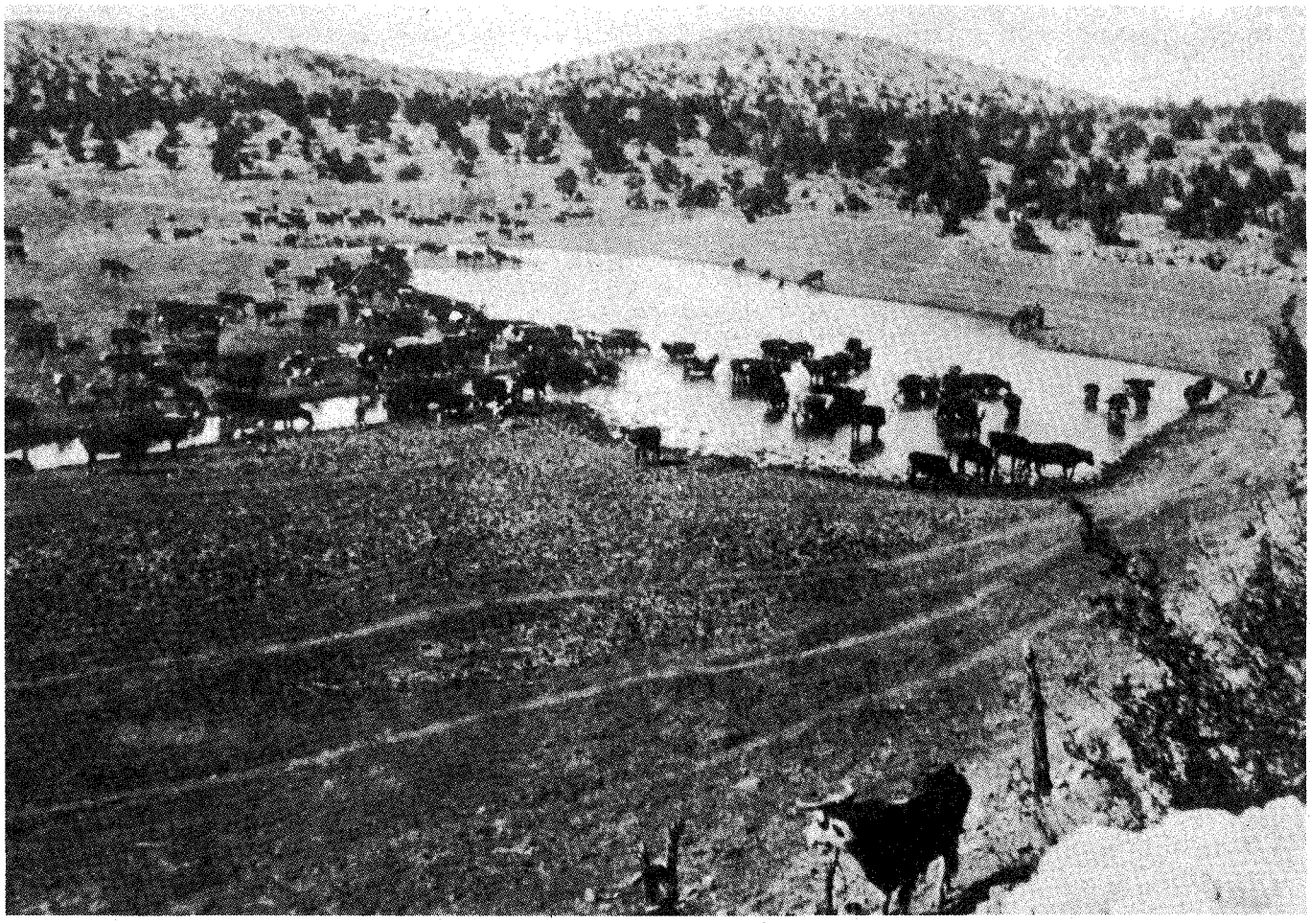

Grounds Family Photo

Grounds' cattle at the Claysprings tank.

could hear mournful drums in the distance. They later learned two Indians had died from eating the vegetables, while the others became extremely ill. Bud Grounds feared a retaliation, but the Walapais never came. He received word the Indians were blaming the sicknesses and deaths on bad coyote medicine, as it had happened many times prior to his arrival at Claysprings. Still, he hesitated to leave his family alone when the case of his 1874 losses finally came up. After Cole volunteered to protect Melissa and the children, Grounds took the next train out of Hackberry for Washington, D.C.

Jack Cole stayed close to the Grounds home for several days until they needed fresh vegetables from the garden. As soon as he left, a band of Walapais rode up to the Grounds' house seeking water for their horses. Rainfall had been minimal that year and Melissa explained to the Indians that there was only enough water for her own stock. Angered at being denied access to the trough, one of the Indians, known as Jim Wilder, nudged his horse forward and dared her to stop him.

Melissa refused to be intimidated and ordered Wilder and his friends to leave. Wilder ignored her and turned his horse toward the trough. He got within inches of the water before Melissa grabbed one of the cedar staves from the fence and swung it at the man's mount, forcing him back. The Indian then tried to trample her beneath his horse, but she warded off his attack with a few strikes on the animal's nose. Her children joined in by throwing rocks at Wilder, forcing him to retreat. Whether it was in fear of what the army would do if they harmed the family, or out of respect for a woman with such bravado, the Walapais chose to leave the Grounds' home and water their horses at a spring a mile farther on.

Bud Grounds returned to find Hackberry citizens upset over the brazen way the Walapais were harassing people, and he immediately rode home. Upon finding his family safe, he and Cole went to find Wilder. Because the other Walapais would not cooperate and tell the men where Wilder was hiding out, Grounds could do nothing but return home and forget the incident.

The Walapai Indians eventually settled on a reservation at Peach Springs, approximately fifty miles northeast of Kingman, Arizona, where they still reside. With the $19,147 he received from the government as compensation for his 1874 cattle losses, Grounds purchased more cattle.

But the drought of 1898 to 1900 dried the numerous water holes that once dotted the cattle range in northwestern Arizona Territory, and cattle began to die by the hundreds. The remainder ate what grama grass and white sage the ranchers managed to save, keeping them alive long enough for cattlemen to take them to the grasslands of California.

In the early 1900s Grounds made his final cattle drive, delivering several herds to Bakersfield, California. He settled his family in Fresno and, with money from his mine holdings, built a three-story home where he lived until his wife died of a stroke on April 30, 1923. He returned to Arizona and lived the rest of his life near Hackberry. William F. "Bud" Grounds died there on July 4, 1930, from what was described in the *Mohave County Miner* as "a complication of disorders."

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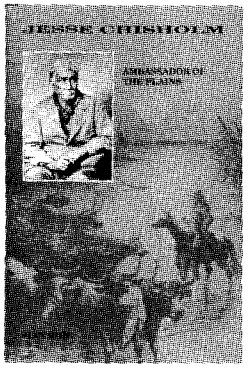
282—HELL'S HALF ACRE: THE LIFE AND LEGEND OF A RED LIGHT DISTRICT. By Richard F. Selcer. Fort Worth's legendary tenderloin district is the subject of this new study. Controversial in its heyday and still debated today, Hell's Half Acre was a wild and woolly collection of bordellos, cribs, dance halls, saloons, and gambling parlors. Selcer successfully separates myth from reality in this generously illustrated, well-researched book. Texas Christian University Press.

Paper, $15.95

249—CLEARWATER COUNTRY! THE TRAVELER'S HISTORICAL & RECREATIONAL GUIDE, LEWISTON, IDAHO—MISSOULA, MONTANA. By Borg Hendrickson & Linwood Laughy. Spotlighting a little noticed area of the West, this book provides an excellent reference guide to travel though the wilderness and mountains of Clearwater Country, straddling the border of Idaho and Montana. Survey this area's remarkable and rich past and chart opportunities for your own exploration and relaxation. Mountain Meadow Press. **Paper, $8.95**



278—JESSE CHISHOLM: AMBASSADOR OF THE PLAINS. By Stan Hoig. Chisholm played many roles: trailblazer, scout, trader, and, most importantly, diplomat between the Plains Indians and the U.S. government. Using a wealth of source materials, Hoig provides a portrait of Chisholm that in many ways surpasses the myths surrounding him. This is a long-overdue biography. University Press of Colorado.

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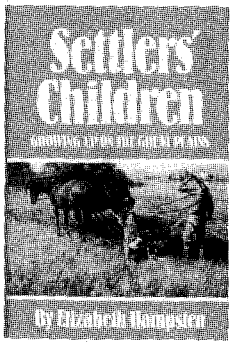

279—SETTLERS' CHILDREN: GROWING UP ON THE GREAT PLAINS. By Elizabeth Hampsten. Using letters, diaries, reminiscences, and oral interviews, Hampsten develops a sense of what life was like for children of pioneer families. She offers a clear, composite, realistic picture of frontier childhood. University of Oklahoma Press.

Cloth, $22.95

306—WILDEST OF THE WILD WEST: TRUE TALES OF A FRONTIER TOWN ON THE SANTA FE TRAIL. By Howard Bryan. Real life in the West was oftentimes wilder than fiction, as those tales of the Santa Fe Trail and Las Vegas, New Mexico, vividly portray. Historic photos and a lively text chronicle sixtyyears of dramatic events in the life of a frontier community and its environs. Clear Light Publishing.

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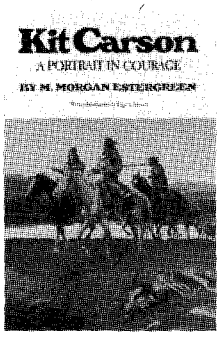
045—U-BET: A GREENHORN IN OLD MONTANA. By John R. Barrows; intro. by Richard B. Roeder. A voracious reader of dime novels, author Barrows found more sheepmen and cattlemen than Indians and legendary characters when he arrived with his parents in Montana Territory in 1879. Barrows recalls his early career as a cowboy for the DHS outfit in the 1880s in *U-bet*, regarded by many as a classic first-person account of the cowboy life. University of Nebraska Press.

Paper, $8.95



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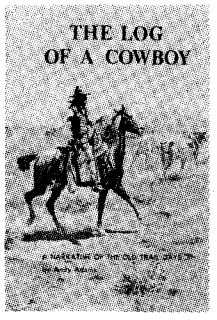
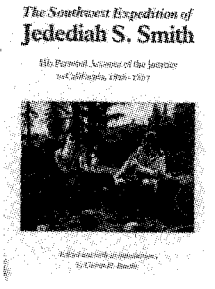


216—THE LOG OF A COWBOY: A NARRATIVE OF THE OLD TRAIL DAYS. By Andy Adams. First published in 1903, this enduring classic of Texas trail driving has been described as "the finest piece of literature that the cattle-country has produced." Adams' first-person chronicle is drawn from his twelve years' experience as a ranch and trail hand and is generally regarded as authentic and reliable. "The work of a realist"—*The New Republic.* University of Nebraska Press.

Paper, $8.95



198—THE SOUTHWEST EXPEDITION OF JEDEDIAH S. SMITH. Ed. by George R. Brooks. Smith's long-lost journals of great exploring expedition of 1826 is available to the general public for the first time. Smith was to western exploration what Benjamin Franklin was to the world of invention. No one did more to open the American West than this mountain man. University of Nebraska Press.

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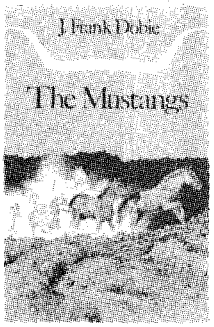

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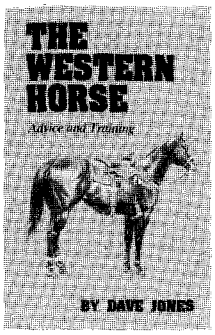

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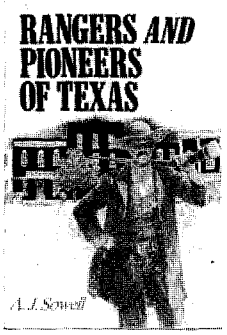

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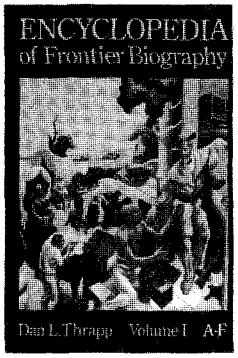

300—ENCYCLOPEDIA OF FRONTIER BIOGRAPHY, VOLUME I: A-F. By Dan Thrapp. First of three volumes that comprise a wealth of information about persons who lived on the American frontier. Altogether, the three-volume set profiles approximately 4,500 frontier figures. This set is a "must." University of Nebraska Press. **Paper, $20.00**
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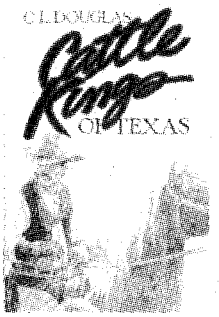

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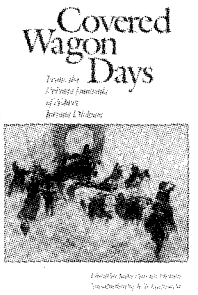

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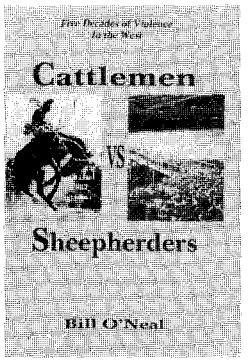

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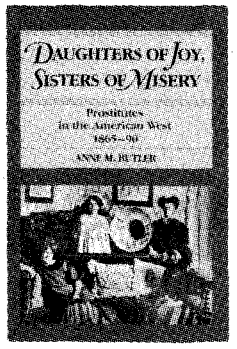

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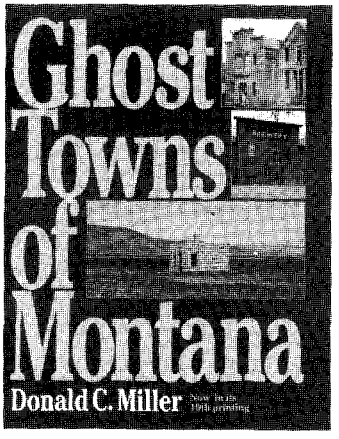

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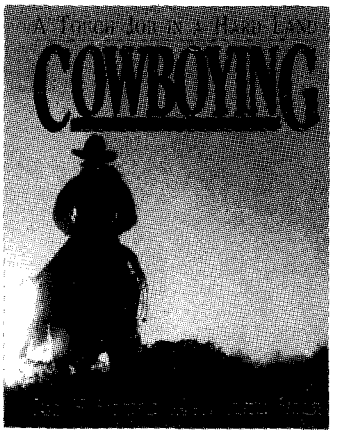

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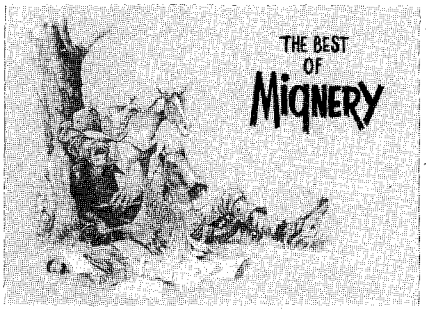

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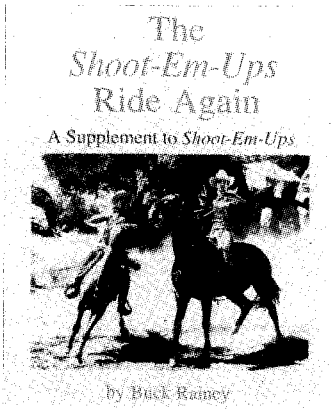

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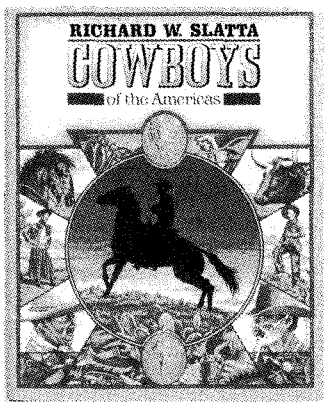

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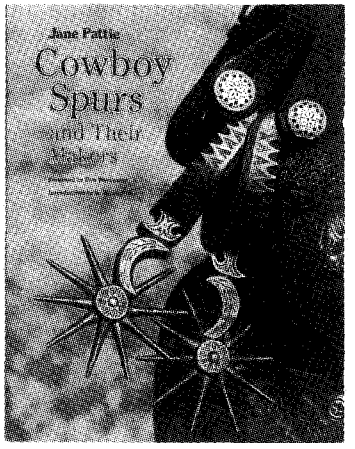

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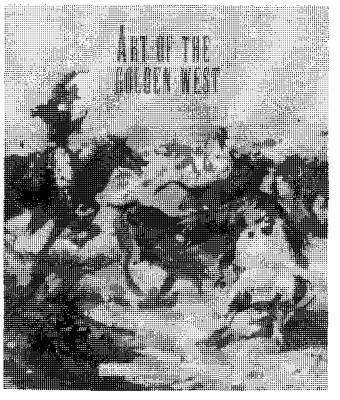

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"Crazy Bob" Womack: Cripple Creek Prospector

By RUTH WILLETT LANZA

Bob Womack in later years, probably on the day he was honored at Cripple Creek.

Bob Womack was addicted to fast horses, liquor, dice, and ladies of the night. But he was also one of Colorado's least-heralded pioneers, driven by the lure of the gold that he hoped would make him rich. People often derided him behind his back and called him "Crazy Bob" for searching for gold where they thought it didn't exist. He persisted, though, and was the first to discover gold at Cripple Creek, Colorado.

In the spring of 1861, at the beginning of the Civil War, Bob's father Samuel, an old Kentucky gentleman, left his wife Corella and young children to go to Colorado Territory in search of gold. He had heard about Colorado's first gold discovery at Clear Creek in Gilpin County three years earlier. Samuel, a secessionist, feared that seventeen-year-old Bob might be subject to a Union draft in the border state of Kentucky, so he took his son to Colorado with him.

Like most Kentucky boys, Bob loved to hunt and ride horses, so he looked forward to his new life in the Rocky Mountains. They tried their luck at Clear Creek and Bob followed his father down the gulches and through the mines at Central City and Idaho Springs, learning all he could about gold and silver mining. That same year Samuel, who had been fairly prosperous, sent for the rest of his family, and they settled in the new territory.

By 1867 Samuel had put aside savings of about $10,000 earned from mining. He decided to look for a ranch that his boys, William and Bob, could run as his health was poor and he wanted to rest. The family finally settled on a ranch fifteen miles south of Colorado City, near Deadman's Canyon on the Little Fountain Creek. Samuel stocked the ranch with cattle, named it Sunview, and appointed the boys its managers.

However, Bob wasn't much of a ranch manager. All he really cared about was riding the range and drinking. William did not drink like his brother but was more suited to city life. Samuel, fearing the boys would never settle down, finally gave up on them and turned the ranch over to Bob's sister, Eliza, whom everybody called Miss Lyda.

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Early days at Cripple Creek mining camp.

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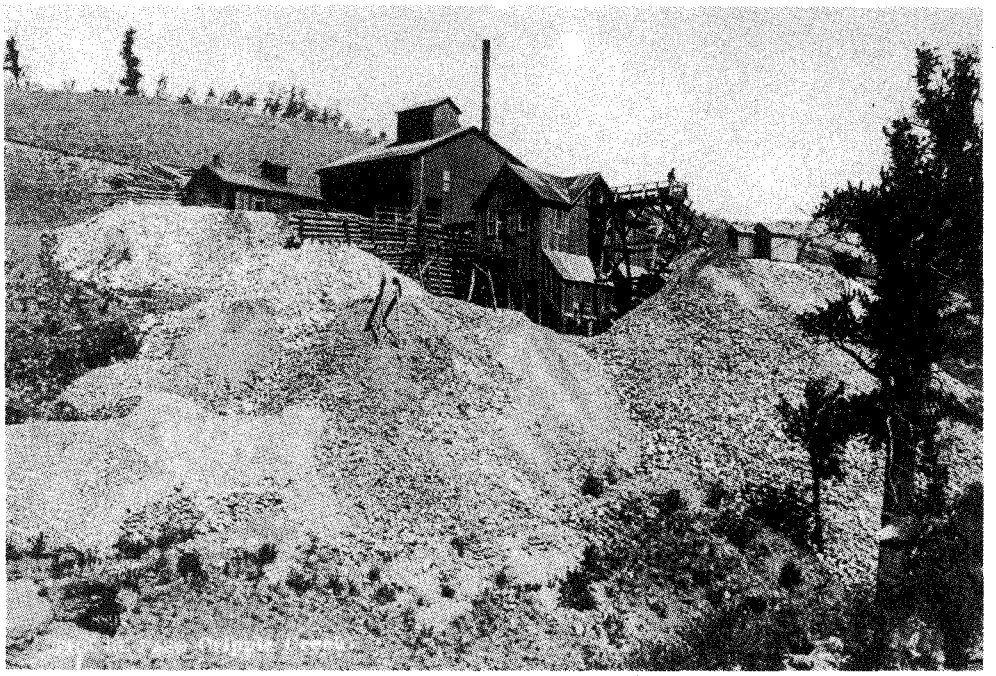

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Bob Womack discovered the El Paso Mine at Cripple Creek.

She was a crackerjack manager and a stern disciplinarian, but hard as she tried, she couldn't teach Bob a thing. She finally just hired him on as a cowboy, which suited him fine. Every time Miss Lyda paid Bob, he hightailed it to Colorado City and "painted the town red." He loved to gallop down Colorado Avenue when he was drunk and shoot out all the street lights. One night he even rode his white horse up the front steps of the town's finest bordello, much to the delight of the "girls," who were all his friends.

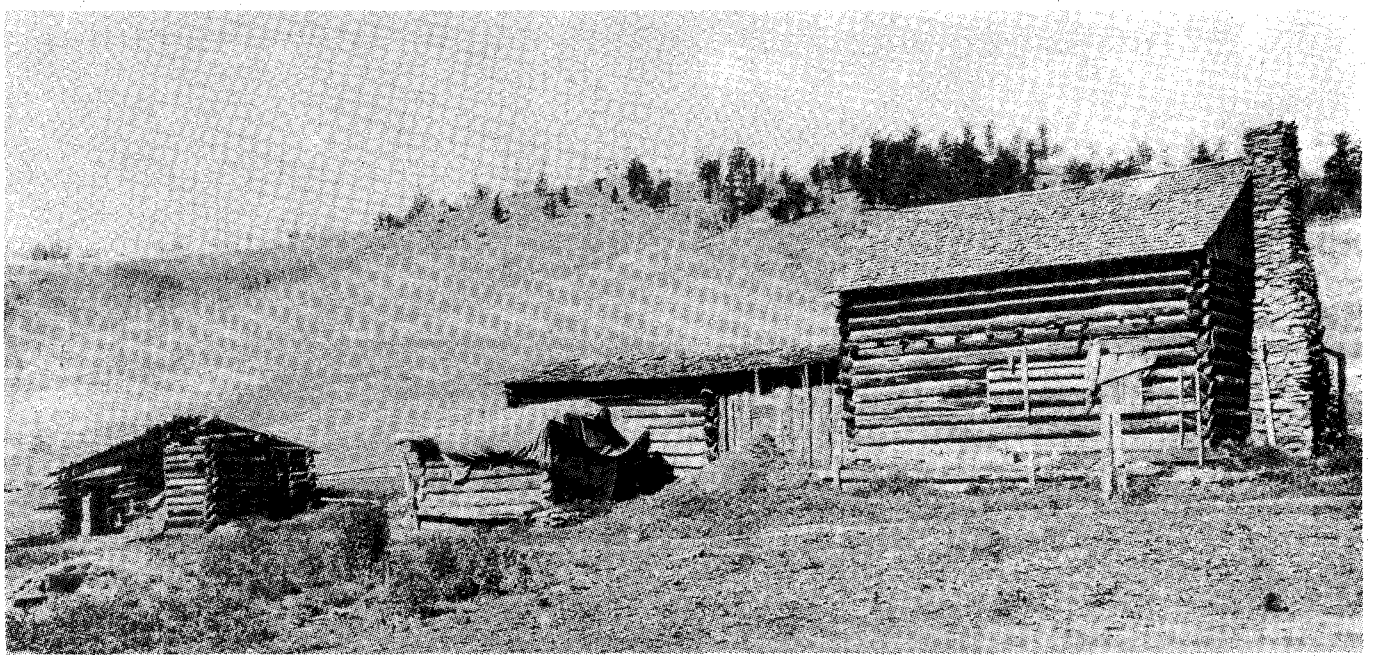
Bob's carousing landed him in jail about once a month. Still, the pioneer citizens of Colorado City admired his riding talent (he could lean down from his saddle and pick up a bottle of liquor by the neck with his teeth) and his hunting skill.

After Miss Lyda clashed with William's new wife, Ida, and Bob's shenanigans drove her to distraction, Samuel ordered his sons and Ida off the Sunview Ranch. Samuel found another ranch in the high mountain valley, near a spring called Cripple Creek, and bought the squatter's rights to it from Levi Welty for $500 and two pigs. He sent William and Ida up to homestead it. Bob went along to ride the range and built himself a cabin two miles south of the spring at Requa Gulch. He called it Poverty Gulch, a foreboding and prophetic name, at least for him.

Bob was in heaven with his shack, his own piece of land, and his white horse, which he called Whistler for the time a bee sting swelled its nose, causing it to whistle when it breathed. Bob spent his days riding over the rolling hills and gulches, his head down, always watching for any of the signs of gold he had learned so well in Gilpin County. Rocks showing quartz, he knew, indicated the presence of gold or silver.

On a spring day in 1878 Bob found a piece of gray rock, called "float" because it had floated down from a main outcropping of rock, and he knew that if the float showed gold, somewhere above him there was a rock with a gold vein, called a lode. He sent the float to Denver, and sure enough it contained gold ore worth $200 a ton.

Bob dug ditches, split rock, and blasted with dynamite to get beneath the surface. Each time he found another piece of gold float, he grew more excited and more determined to find the mother lode that he knew lay beneath Poverty Gulch. When he rode into town, he talked incessantly about his float and of his search for gold, but no one took him seriously. They only ridiculed and



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The Womacks' ranch sold for $500 and two pigs in 1876.

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Cripple Creek prospectors in the early days of mining.

teased him about his foolish dream.

In the meantime, Bob's mother died and the Womacks sold the ranch at Cripple Creek to the Pikes Peak Land and Cattle Company. William and Ida returned to Kentucky, but Bob stayed on at Poverty Gulch to look for gold.

Miss Lyda, who still lived at Sunview Ranch with Samuel, took pity on her ne'er-do-well brother and gave him a real bed to sleep on, instead of the bedroll he had been using. She also gave him a cane rocker to place on the porch, where he often sat on long summer evenings to watch the sun set over the hills.

Soon the ranch sold again to two real estate men from Denver who named it Broken Box Ranch and sent George Carr to manage it. That pleased Bob, as he had been lonesome after William and Ida left, and he enjoyed George and Emma Carr's company, as well as Emma's good cooking.

Bob still rode down to Colorado City every time he got paid to play faro, get drunk, and visit the girls. He was popular with the "fancy ladies" because he was a handsome fellow, full of fun, and known for his kind and generous nature.

He continued talking about his discovery and tried in vain to get financial backing for his gold search. But because of his wild ways and a reputation more for honesty than shrewdness, nobody gave credence to his claim or offered him help.

Bob dug ditches, split rock, and blasted with dynamite to get beneath the surface. Each time he found another piece of gold float, he grew more determined to find the mother lode that he knew lay beneath Poverty Gulch. When he rode into town, he talked incessantly about his gold float, but no one took him seriously.

In 1886 Bob finally staked a claim which showed traces of gold. He called it "Grand View," but he was so broke he sold two-thirds interest in it for $500.

Then in 1889 his dentist, Dr. John Grannis, who was a poor man, gambled that Bob knew what he was talking about; he figured it was the only way *he* would ever get rich. Grannis got a loan from the bank at seven percent interest to grubstake Bob, with the agreement that he would receive half interest in anything Bob found.

Bob was ecstatic and went right out and bought some new duds and a bottle of liquor. Then he returned to Poverty Gulch and continued prospecting with a vengeance.

One year later, and twelve years after he had started his search, Bob discovered the outcropping of rock with a vein of gold on the north slope of Poverty Gulch. It was what he had been dreaming of, and he knew that if he dug deep enough, he would find the mother lode that would make him rich.

He removed the stakes of his Grand View claim and placed new stakes marked, "El Paso Lode, Located Oct. 20, 1890, by R.M. Womack and John Grannis, Unknown Mining Dist."

Bob rushed to Carr's cabin to tell them the news and to celebrate his discovery, although he realized that to dig further required even more money. He would need equipment and tools to dig a mine shaft, haul out the rock and

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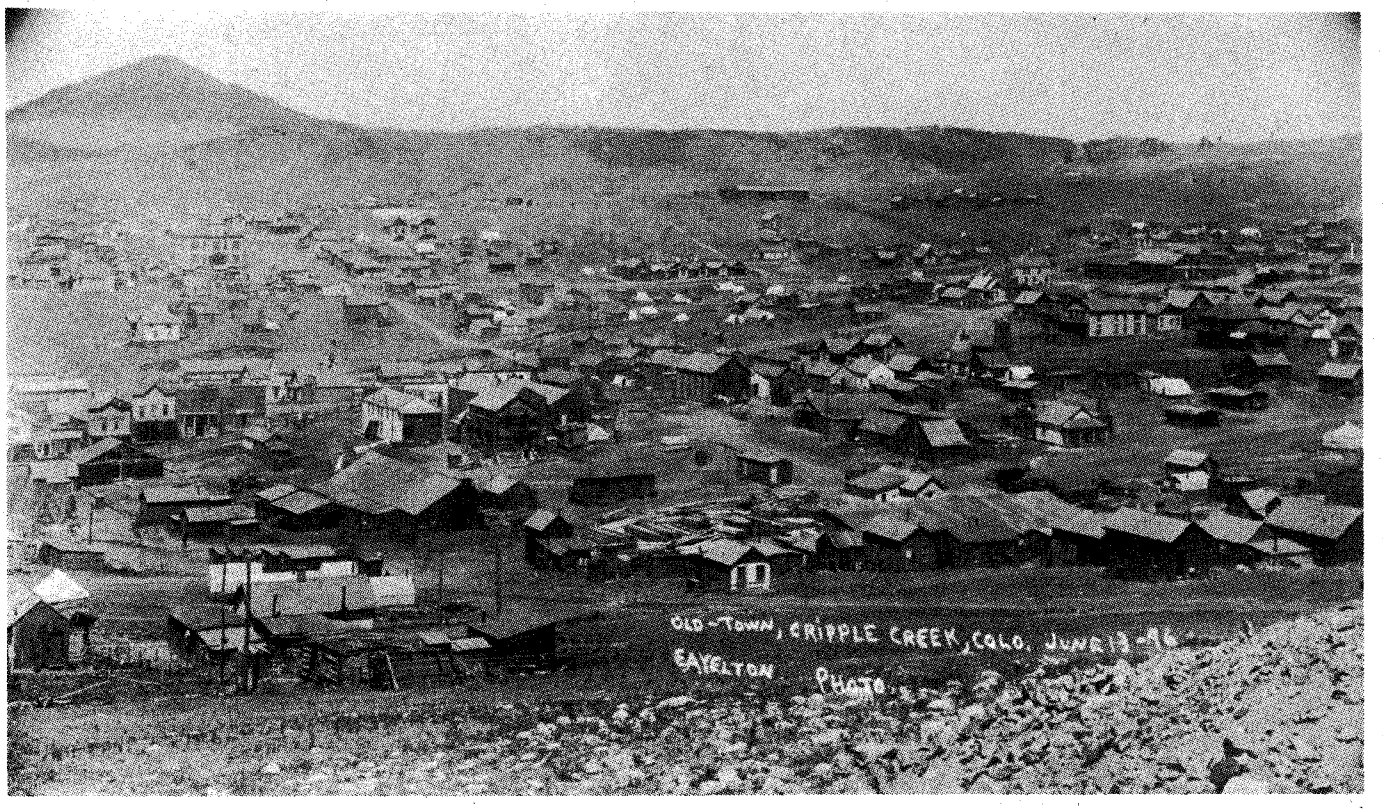

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Cripple Creek in 1890. Mt. Pisgah is in the background.

smelt it to separate out the gold. Knowing that Dr. Grannis couldn't raise any more money, Bob filled a sack with gold ore and took it back down to Colorado Springs to find backing.

Bob Womack's discovery on that fateful day started the rush for gold at Cripple Creek, but poor Bob, for all his persistence and honesty, didn't fare so well. When he reached Colorado Springs he placed some of the ore in the window of a feed store, hoping to get someone's attention. No one took him seriously or offered to back him, as he was considered "a fool with his money."

However, two shrewd, gold-hungry men, who had had no luck at mining, decided to investigate Bob's claim on their own. On a cold winter day, E.M. De La Vergne, whose wealthy family owned a furniture store, and Fred Frisbee, his upholsterer, hightailed it up to Cripple Creek. They got snowed in at the Broken Box Ranch, and George Carr, being an obliging soul, furnished them with fresh horses and a tour of Bob's Poverty Gulch claim.

Frisbee and De La Vergne returned later and staked a claim just north of Bob's and called it El Dorado. Then they hauled a wagon load of ore down to Pueblo and got a favorable report of $200 per ton. The El Dorado eventually brought in $10 million. That spring when Bob and Dr. Grannis returned to Cripple Creek, they saw the El Dorado staring them in the face and "Bob discovered that he'd been forstalled."

In the beginning Bob had neglected to file his claim correctly. If that weren't bad enough, after he'd given the promised half-interest to Dr. Grannis, Frisbee persuaded Bob to sell him four-fifths interest of his remaining share in the El Paso for $5,000. That probably seemed like a fortune to poor Bob, who had never had two nickels to rub together. Sometime later, Bob's El Paso Mine became part of the famous Gold King Mine, which made millions.

THE FIRST shipment of gold ore from Frisbee and De La Vergne's Gold King Mine was made in November 1891 and a new gold rush was on. That first year gold produced at Cripple Creek amounted to about $200,000.

During the next few years Bob staked thirty or forty claims. Some of them were the Katie Star, the Long Star, Kittie M., Abe Lincoln, and even the C.O.D. Mine, which later made Spencer Penrose a millionaire and enabled him to build the famous Broadmoor Hotel in Colorado Springs. All of these mines were good producers, and some changed hands many times.

But Bob could never find the time to work them or raise the money to develop them. He gave most of the claims away to friends or strangers who couldn't find their own gold. He sold some of the claims for just enough to gamble with or to stake himself to a meal. One of the people he showed around the gold camp that first year was a carpenter from Colorado Springs named Winfield Scott Stratton, who knew a lot about mining and later staked his own claim, the Independence. He became Cripple Creek's first millionaire.

For a time Bob was the center of attention, and he loved to hear people say that he was "the feller who first discovered gold at Cripple Creek." In fact, people began to call Bob the "Father of Cripple Creek" and even considered naming the Cripple Creek District "Womack." Bob tried to use his newfound fame to help his friend, George Carr, win the 1891 Cripple Creek mayoral election. Bob served as his campaign manager but got drunk the night before the election, tied Carr's opponent by the ankles and hauled him through the streets. Of course Carr, who might have won without Bob's help, lost the election.

Even though the Cripple Creek gold camp produced over 500 mines and at least thirty millionaires over the next few years, none of the money went into Bob's pockets. "No wonder they called him Crazy Bob," said one newspaperman at the time.

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In December 1893 Bob took sick with pneumonia and a black madame at Cripple Creek, Milda James, sent her girls over to his shack to nurse him back to health with hot broth and doses of kerosene. On Christmas morning he staggered out, pale and weak, and sold his Womack Placer Mine for $500. Bob had always loved children, so he had the money changed into one dollar bills and handed them out to all the children who passed by. When a stranger tried to horn in on his Santa Claus act, Bob hit him. The man hit back and Bob, still weakened by his recent illness, passed out on the street.

The sheriff called Miss Lyda, and when she got to Cripple Creek she found a very despondent Bob. The rich miners were the big-shots now, and he was broke and forgotten. He threatened to jump down a mine shaft and end it all, but Miss Lyda persuaded him to return to Sunview Ranch with her. Later she sold the ranch and bought a boarding house at North Nevada Avenue and St. Vrain Street in Colorado Springs, where Bob lived for the rest of his life.

While he lived with Miss Lyda, others continued to make their fortune at Cripple Creek, and he returned there from time to time, marvelling at its growth and taking credit for its prosperity.

IN 1900 THE Colorado Springs *Evening Telegraph* described Bob as "simple and goodhearted as a child, and no doubt these are the very traits that were his undoing." The same author rented a room that looked over Miss Lyda's boarding house and watched Bob going about his duties, splitting wood and wearing a bib apron while helping with the dishes. "All the time he is singing away or talking merrily—the man who has a right to be worth fifty-millions," said the reporter.

Knowing that he was without funds, the editor of the *Gazette Telegraph* and some pioneers tried to raise a trust-fund for Bob, but donations came to less than $1,000. However, one day when W.S. Stratton saw Bob walking down the street, looking shabby and downtrodden, he handed him $5,000. Of the fifty men who made their fortunes from Bob's gold camp, only Stratton saw fit to help him. None of the others who had made small fortunes, and they numbered in the hundreds, ever befriended the lonely dreamer who had made their "good luck" possible by his persistence.

In 1902 Bob had one day of glory. He was invited to Cripple Creek for a celebration, where he was honored as the man who had discovered the famous gold camp. Members of the Elk's Club sent their honor guard to meet him at the train, and they escorted him into town. He rode in the parade in a carriage that was decorated with flowers, as the crowds lining the sidewalk cheered.

Bob suffered a stroke and was paralyzed for seven years before his death. Miss Lyda gave him the loving care he needed, and his many nieces and nephews showered him with attention. Bob Womack was an enigma. He died penniless on August 10, 1909, at the age of sixty-six. Although not one miner attended his funeral, his many relatives gathered, grief-striken, to pay their last respects to the man they all loved—the man who should have been a millionaire.

Local History Collection, Penrose Public Library

Bennett Avenue at Cripple Creek, 1901.

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BASS REEVES

Deputy U.S. Marshal

By ART T. BURTON

Illustrations by BUD McCAULLEY

Indian Territory, now the state of Oklahoma, was one of the most dangerous areas of the West for lawmen. Over 120 deputy United States marshals died in pre-statehood Oklahoma, and the deadliest region for them was within a fifty-mile radius of Muskogee. The town was a terminal on the Missouri, Kansas and Texas Railroad in the Creek Nation. At one time it was said that Muskogee had at least one killing a day, and the surrounding area had more bandits, horse thieves, counterfeiters, whiskey peddlers, and train robbers per square mile than any other place in the United States. In 1875 federal judge Isaac Parker hired 200 deputy U.S. marshals to patrol the 75,000 square miles in the region, and possibly the most feared of them was a black lawman named Bass Reeves.

REEVES WAS perhaps the first black deputy hired west of the Mississippi River. Parker acknowledged difficulties white deputies had in Indian Territory, as many of them were not familiar with the languages, customs, or cultures of the dominant Five Civilized Tribes—the Seminoles, Creeks, Choctaws, Chickasaws, and Cherokees. However, blacks had a long relationship with those Indians. Prior to the Civil War, black slaves made the journey from the southeast with their Indian owners, and all the tribes had some mixture of African blood in their ranks. Indian Freedmen, as the former slaves of Indians were called, became a logical choice to work as federal lawmen.

However, Bass Reeves was not an Indian Freedman. He was born in Lamar County, Texas, in 1838, a slave of Colonel George Reeves, who later became speaker of the house of the Texas State Legislature. Family history says that as a young man Reeves got into a fight with his master and knocked him out cold. He fled north across the Red River into the Indian nations as a runaway slave.

Reeves fought with Union Indians in the territory during the Civil War. Making the retreat with them north toward Kansas, he stayed in the territory with Union guerrillas and later fought with the Indian Home Guards. During that time Reeves became an expert with pistol and rifle and learned Indian Territory like the back of his hand. After the war Reeves served as a guide and interpreter for deputy U.S. marshals in the territory.

Reeves took his lawman's commission seriously and became a well-known

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manhunter. He stood six-feet, two-inches tall and weighed about 180 pounds. It was said Reeves could whip any two men with his bare fists. He always rode a large horse and favored sorrels and bays. Popular history had it that the only man to evade Reeves was named Hellubee Sammy, who had a very fast black horse that outran Reeves' mount.

At first Reeves made the regular trips from Fort Smith that all the deputies made. They would leave Fort Smith, work west to Fort Reno, south to Fort Sill and east back to Fort Smith. This trip would cover about 900 miles and take about a month. The deputies would take one or two prison wagons, which looked very much like prairie schooners, a cook who doubled as a driver, and one or two possemen. The number in the posse varied depending on the task at hand. The deputies worked on a fee basis and were reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses such as the meals they provided for the prisoners during the trek back to Fort Smith. Bass Reeves later became the principal deputy marshal for the Creek, Seminole, and Chickasaw nations. Besides Fort Smith, Reeves was stationed at Paris, Texas; Wetumka, Indian Territory; and Muskogee.

Reeves was proud of his detective skills and, in fact, was a master of disguise. Sometimes he dressed as a farmer, cowboy, tramp, or outlaw, and he used many aliases.

ONE OF THE more popular stories of his work in disguise took place in the 1890s. Reeves received a tip that some outlaws were hiding in an abandoned log cabin about a mile east of the saloon town of Keokuk Falls in Pottawatomie County, Oklahoma Territory. Keokuk Falls was then one of the wildest, fiercest saloon towns on the border of the Seminole Nation. All the Indian Nations were dry, and to get whiskey, residents had to go across the border into Oklahoma Territory where the saloons were legal.

The Wewoka Trading Post, then owned by John F. Brown, Jr., chief of the Seminole Nation, had been robbed, and Bass Reeves went to investigate; the outlaws' trail led to Keokuk Falls. Informants there told Reeves that four men fitting a description of the outlaws had been in the Red Dog Saloon the night before and had ridden east into the Creek Nation. Reeves picked up the trail and located the abandoned cabin, half-hidden in a clump of trees. As he approached he noticed smoke rising out of the chimney. After sizing up the scenario, he decided to disguise himself as a tenant farmer.

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The following morning Reeves rented a yoke of aged oxen hitched to a rickety wagon and proceeded toward the cabin. Driving close he deliberately got the wagon hung up on a large stump.

When the unsuspecting desperadoes came out to help, they played right into Reeves' hands. He let them assist him in freeing the wagon, but just as they finished, he produced two menacing Colt revolvers. Reeves disarmed the outlaws, chained them together, and padlocked them to the wagon wheel, then recovered the stolen loot from the cabin. The deputy then marched them in front of the wagon to the county seat at Tecumseh over thirty miles away.

Reeves tried to avoid shootouts; however, he did admit to killing at least fourteen men, all in the line of duty. One of Reeves' most famous gunfights was in June 1884. A year earlier Reeves had been given a warrant to bring in Jim Webb, foreman of the huge Billy Washington Ranch in the Chickasaw Nation, for murder. A black circuit preacher named William Stewart had a small ranch adjoining the Washington ranch, and in the spring of 1883 started a grass fire which got out of control and spread onto Washington land. Webb was sent over to confront the preacher; a furious argument ensued and Webb murdered Stewart.

REEVES located Webb, and after a short gunfight with one of Webb's men, he was able to secure Webb for a trip back to Fort Smith. Chris Bywater bonded Webb out at Fort Smith and Webb did not show up for his court date.

Reeves was again given the warrant for Webb, and located him deep in the Chickasaw Nation near the Arbuckle Mountains. Reeves and his posseman, John Cantrell, found Webb at Bywater's Store at what is now Woodford, Oklahoma. When Reeves and his posse came within sight of the store, Cantrell went ahead to learn whether Webb was actually there. Cantrell slipped up to the store, spied Webb, and signaled for Reeves to ride up. Webb saw the deputy coming and jumped through an open window. Webb had both his rifle and pistol and made a dash for his horse tied nearby.

Reeves spurred his horse ahead in time to block Webb from reaching his horse, calling repeatedly for his surrender. Webb, realizing that he was cut off from his horse, turned and ran toward the nearby underbrush. Reeves followed Webb on his horse, still calling for the outlaw to surrender.

After running about 600 yards, Webb realized that escape on foot was impossible, stopped running, and made a last ditch attempt to avoid arrest. He turned and faced Reeves, unlimbered his Winchester, and began shooting as fast as he could lever ammunition into the breech.

Webb's first shot grazed Reeves' saddle horn, the second cut a button off his coat, and the third shot tore the reins out of his hand, causing Reeves to lose control of his horse. Reeves jumped off the animal, pulling his Winchester from its scabbard in the same motion. Just as Reeves landed on his feet, Webb's fourth shot clipped the brim of his hat! Reeves fired twice at 500 yards and Webb fell to the ground, mortally wounded. Both of Reeves' bullets struck

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Webb within a hand's width.

On occasion Reeves worked with other deputy U.S. marshals such as Sam Sixkiller and Bud Ledbetter of Muskogee. "Uncle Bud" said Reeves was one of the bravest men this country has ever produced. Reeves also worked with other black deputy U.S. marshals such as Grant Johnson, stationed at Eufaula; John Garrett, of Okmulgee; Bill Colbert of Atoka; and Ike Rogers, who captured the notorious black outlaw Cherokee Bill.

ONE OF THE best examples of Reeves' dedication to duty was the manhunt he conducted to bring in his son by his first wife for murder. The incident is generally agreed to have occurred after the turn of the century while Reeves was working out of Muskogee for U.S. Marshal Leo Bennett. At the time Reeves received word of his son's warrant he had just arrived in Muskogee with two prisoners for the new federal jail. Bennett did not want to give Reeves the warrant, but the deputy was adamant. His son had had a domestic fight with his wife and accidentally killed her. Instead of turning himself in to authorities, he ran off into the hills. Reeves brought him in within two weeks. His son served a short sentence in the federal jail in Leavenworth, Kansas, for manslaughter.

The most controversial part of Reeves' career was his trial in 1887 for the murder of his cook. The popular story was that while on a trip into the interior of the territory, Reeves and his cook got into an argument. In the heat of the squabble, the cook threw a pan of scalding grease on Reeves' pet dog. The furious Reeves shot the man, who fell forward into the campfire. Reeves was so upset he left the body in the fire until it charred.

At the trial, Reeves refuted that story and asserted the argument with the cook was minor and the shooting was accidental. He claimed that a bullet lodged in his rifle and when he was in the process of removing the cartridge the gun misfired, hitting the cook in the neck. Trial records indicate a doctor attended the cook before he died; however, there is no record of the disposition of the cook's body. The trial depleted Reeves' savings, and after an intense examination of the evidence, he was found not guilty. Reeves never completely recovered financially from the incident.

On the eve of Oklahoma statehood Bass Reeves was as busy as ever. He was still apprehending fugitives and desperadoes, while others were still making attempts on his life. At about 10:00 p.m., November 13, 1906, Reeves was fired upon while crossing under a railroad trestle somewhere north of Wybark, Indian Territory. The would-be assassin's bullets sent showers of splinters over his head. Reeves returned fire from his buggy, but the assailants got away. Bass said he knew all the local criminals, thought that more than one person had attacked him, and was sure he would eventually catch them.

Reeves ended his illustrious, thirty-two-year career in Muskogee. Shortly after the turn of the century, he told a Pauls Valley newspaper that he had arrested over 3,000 men and women for

Webb's first shot grazed Reeves' saddle horn, the second cut a button off his coat, and the third shot tore the reins out of his hand, causing Reeves to lose control of his horse. Reeves jumped off the animal, pulling his Winchester from its scabbard in the same motion. Just as Reeves landed on his feet, Webb's fourth shot clipped the brim of his hat!

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federal crimes! This was phenomenal considering he could neither read nor write and memorized his writs by oral instruction. At his retirement from federal service in 1907, he had over a dozen threatening notes from outlaws still on the loose. Reeves worked nearly two years after statehood for the Muskogee police force, and in that time not one crime was reported on his beat—a fact of which he was quite proud.

Bass Reeves died of natural causes on January 12, 1910. He was never wounded by gunfire, though he was in numerous gunfights. He was buried in Muskogee after a large funeral which Indians, whites, and blacks attended. People would later sit around the federal courthouse in Muskogee and tell stories of invincible deputy marshal Bass Reeves—an Oklahoma legend.

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Mystery Death in the Palace

By JACQUELINE DORGAN MEKETA

It was a peaceful Sunday morning in June 1869, and the church bells at the cathedral in Santa Fe pealed for early Mass, awakening both sinners and the faithful. But the young servant girl hurrying down the hallway in the adobe Palace of the Governors had risen more than an hour before. As always she had made a fire and cooked breakfast for the colonel. Then, following her usual routine, she entered his bedroom to awaken him; his clothes were neatly placed on a nearby chair, but he was not there. After cleaning the room she headed for his office.

Moments later the woman's horrified screams tore the morning quiet. Lying on the floor in a pool of blood was the dead body of Colonel James L. Collins, the United States depositary responsible for all federal money in the city. Shock turned her cold, then she whirled and ran stumbling and crying out of the building and through the streets to the nearby home of the colonel's daughter, Mrs. James M. Edgar.

By the time the daughter and her husband arrived at the scene, the news had already begun to spread through Santa Fe. Within a few minutes excited people began to assemble at the palace in large numbers. Most expressed outrage that this esteemed elderly man, a longtime territorial resident, had been murdered. There was irony in the timing of the tragedy. It was well known that the following morning Colonel Collins was scheduled to turn over the depository to his successor, Captain E.W. Little.

On the day following the event, the Santa Fe *Weekly New Mexican* published a description of the death scene. "Upon entering the room the diabolical work of the assassins and robbers was presented to view," the article read. "The dead body of Col. Collins lay upon the floor in a pool of coagulated blood with a bullet hole through the heart, and over the floor were scattered various sealed packages of fractional currency and sundry piles of the same in small quantities, while the money vault and iron safe showed that they had been

Nicholas Brown Photo, Courtesy of the Museum of New Mexico

Palace of the Governors in Santa Fe, circa 1868, as it looked at the time of James L. Collins' death. The depository was behind the window at left of the picture.

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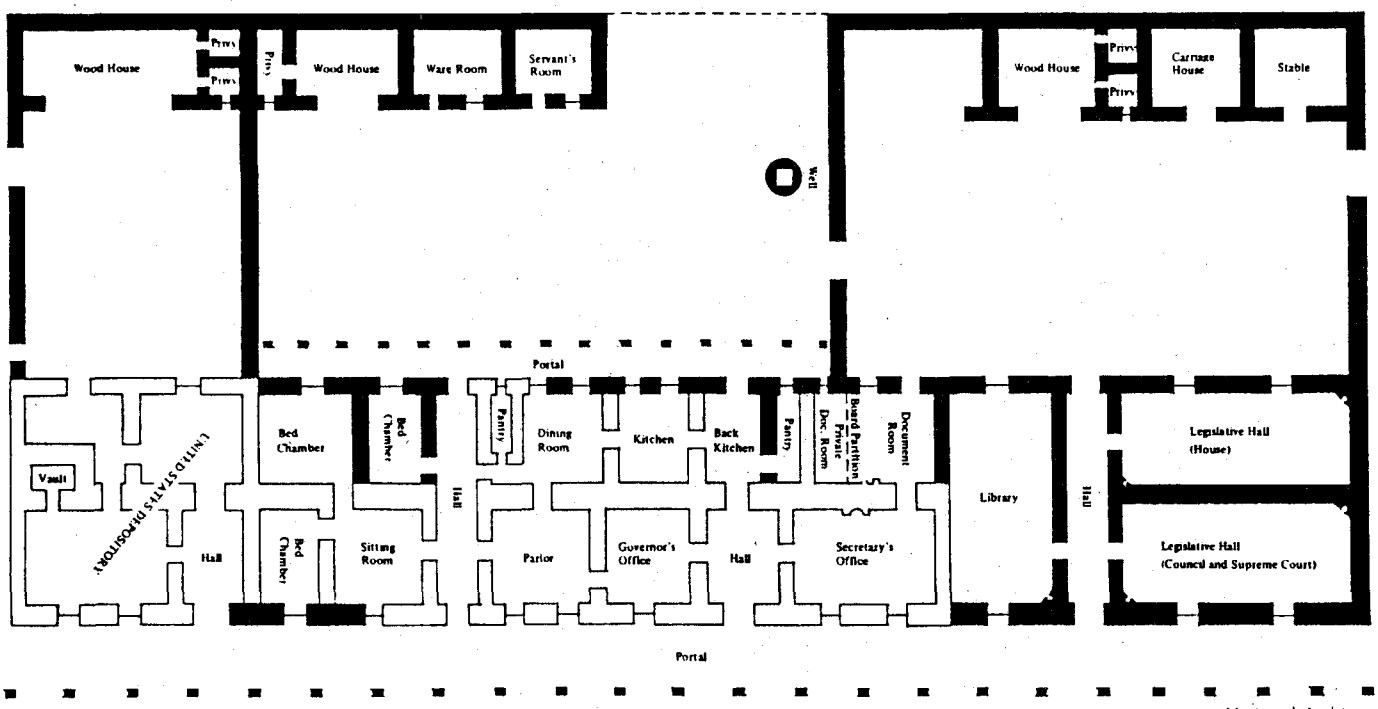

National Archives

Just six months before James L. Collins' mysterious death, this floor plan of the palace was sent to the secretary of the treasury. The U.S. Depository where the body was found is at lower left.

broken open and all the bills of large denominations extracted and carried away. The amount of these it is believed is probably not less than $100,000."

Almost immediately three official acts occurred. Even as the body was being removed a committee of federal officials inventoried the public monies remaining in the depository and informally gave Captain Little possession of the remaining funds. Then a list of serial numbers of some newly-arrived but undistributed twenty-dollar notes was published in the newspaper and H.H. Heath, the territorial secretary, issued a proclamation offering a "large reward" of some unspecified amount, for the "discovery and arrest of the perpetrators of this diabolical murder and robbery."

Word also was sent immediately to Albuquerque because Collins was one of the best-known men in the territory. In 1826, twenty years before New Mexico became part of the United States, he had left Missouri with wagons of goods for trade in Santa Fe and Chihuahua, thus becoming one of the first Americans to arrive in the area.

After service in the Mexican War he enjoyed a long and important career in Santa Fe which included many diverse activities. Collins was involved in exploration of wilderness areas and the establishment of the *Santa Fe Weekly Gazette* which he published for six years. He also was appointed the territory's superintendent of Indian affairs by President James Buchanan and reappointed by Abraham Lincoln.

The robbers' noise awoke Colonel Collins, who got out of bed, picked up a revolver, and went to investigate. "The robbers were, unfortunately, but too ready for him. . . . [A]s soon as he opened the door two shots were fired at him; one missing and the other, with most murderous effect, passing through the heart."

During the Civil War, when General Henry Hopkins Sibley's army of Texans penetrated New Mexico on its way to Fort Union, Collins helped guide some Union soldiers to the Texans' hidden supply train. They destroyed it, assuring a Rebel defeat.

Such prominence guaranteed that all Santa Fe and, indeed, the territory, would be buzzing with rumor and conjecture. Several days later the local newspaper dedicated much space to the story and an effusive eulogy and biography of Colonel Collins.

The paper reported the investigation had shown that the robbers entered the *placita* at the rear, then forced the back door of the office open with iron bars, thus gaining access to the front room which housed both an iron safe and a vault for storing the government money. With a figurative shake of its editorial head, the newspaper said, "The vault was supposed to be strongly constructed and the mechanism of the door so perfect that it would be burglar proof. These rascals, however, being masters of their profession showed that nothing is impossible with their fraternity."

The writer then proceeded to reconstruct the crime through conjecture. He asserted that after the perpetrators gained entry to the office, they immediately began searching for the vault keys and hoped to find them in the iron safe, which they opened using a steel bar found on the premises. Presumably the robbers' noise awoke Colonel Collins, who got out of bed, picked up a revolver, and went to investigate. "The robbers were, unfortunately, but too ready for him. All indications show that as soon as he opened the door two shots were fired at him; one missing and the other, with most murderous effect, passing through the heart."

The article said the thieves managed to find the vault keys and apparently "understood the construction of the burglar proof lock" as they had little trouble opening it. They made off with an estimated $100,000, but $65,000 of the loot was found "on [the] Tuesday morning after the deed was committed . . . in an unoccupied building at the north end of the city, known as the city brewery." Depositary Little took

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A PROCLAMATION!

GREAT REWARD.

WHEREAS, On last Saturday night, the 5th instant, the United States Depository in this city was robbed by parties unknown, and a large amount of public money taken therefrom, and Col. JAMES L. COLLINS, the United States Depositary, murdered,

NOW, BE IT KNOWN, That, in the absence of the Governor from the Capitol, I hereby issue this proclamation, earnestly requesting all good citizens throughout this Territory and elsewhere, and the military authorities likewise, to assist in the discovery and arrest of the perpetrators of this diabolical murder and robbery.

No fixed reward can now be offered, but assurance is hereby given that A LARGE REWARD will be paid by the Government to any person who will either secure the treasure lost, or discover the authors of these crimes, or give such certain information as will lead to their apprehension.

The delivery of any or all of the perpetrators of these crimes at any Military Post in New Mexico, will be regarded as a delivery to the Government.

H. H. HEATH,
Secretary New Mexico.

Santa Fé, June 6, 1869.

UNA PROCLAMA.

GRANDE RECOMPENSA!

Por cuanto, la noche del sabado pasado dia 5 del corriente, la oficina del Depositario de los Estados Unidos en esta ciudad, ha sido robado por personas desconocidas, las cuales han tomado una grande suma del dinero publico, dando por consecuencia el asesinato del coronel Santiago L. Collins, depositario de los Estados Unidos. Con pleno conocimiento de la triste desgracia, y estando el Gobernador ausente de esta capital, me veo obligado a poner esta proclamacion lo mas pronto posible, suplicando a todo buen ciudadano de este territorio y de cualquier otra parte y a las autoridades militares que ayuden en lo posible para descubrir y arrestar a los perpetradores del robo y del homocidio diabolico que han cometido.

No se fija la recompensa que debe ser pagado, pero si se asegura una grande suma que sera pagada por el gobierno a la persona que descubra a los autores de tan nefandos crimines, o que de alguna informacion segura para la aprehension de ellos.

La entrega de cualquiera o de todos los perpetradores de estos crimines en cualquiera posta militar en Nuevo Mejico, sera considerada entrega al gobierno.

H. H. HEATH,
Secretario del Territorio.

Santa Fe, Junio 6 de 1869.

Weekly New Mexican, June 8, 1869

The reward proclamation, published in the local newspapers, was printed in both Spanish and English in bilingual Santa Fe.

possession of the money to await federal instructions.

In a conflicting report, printed in Albuquerque a day earlier, the stolen money was said to have been recovered in the privy of an unoccupied house belonging to Mr. J.M. Edgar, who, of course, was Collins' son-in-law and clerk.

The hidden money was actually found the very morning of Collins' funeral. It was a large, imposing affair, with the deceased borne from Mrs. Edgar's home to Santa Fe's Masonic cemetery, escorted by military, federal, and territorial officers, families in carriages, and a crowd of citizens from every class. But already the capital was awash with scandalous rumors. One newspaper reported that even though all sorts of stories about the "unfortunate affair" were floating about Santa Fe, the publication thought that "the cause of justice would not be subserved by repeating them" and it would refrain from doing so.

Here was a mystery of magnificent proportions. But, though the questions were many, the answers were few and the passage of time has eliminated any chance of determining facts which could help solve the crime.

There are a number of possibilities. The first, of course, is that the event was, indeed, what it was reported to be—a murder and robbery. The second is that Colonel Collins had embezzled the approximately $35,000 which was never recovered and, knowing an accounting would be necessary the next day, set up an elaborate "robbery scenario" to save his good name, then committed suicide. A third possibility is that James Edgar, the son-in-law, committed the crime. Each theory has some merit.

The first interpretation of events became the official version even though no culprits ever were apprehended, the balance of the money never turned up, and rumors and speculation continued. Within days of the murder, after the $65,000 was found in Santa Fe, all mention of the affair suddenly dropped from the pages of the territorial newspapers.

IN ADDITION, in a report accompanying an 1874 House of Representatives bill to relieve Collins' bondsmen of the burden of repaying the still-missing portion of the money, the murder-robbery explanation was deemed correct. However, it was in the interest of the bondsmen that this conclusion be accepted, and they were all men of some importance and influence. They included John S. Watts, a lawyer who had been elected a territorial delegate to Congress and who had served as chief justice of the territorial supreme court, and William W. Mills of El Paso, Texas, a prominent merchant who held sway as a political boss in that area for years. A judgment for $38,593.35 had been rendered against them in United States district court in Santa Fe, but they appealed and the congressional bill was the result of their successful petition to be relieved of repayment responsibilities. The congressional committee members said they were satisfied that Collins had been an excellent officer, had always been known for his integrity, patriotism, and courage, and that, as an elderly man, he had lived a simple life of good habits and exhibited no questionable traits.

The second theory, that of a suicide to cover up a monetary discrepancy, presumably occurred to a number of other people at the time, although it was

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not publicized in print. But in 1897 an Albuquerque newspaper carried some articles in which a former acquaintance of Collins said that the colonel had, indeed, committed suicide. The man, a former stagecoach driver, said that Collins himself had hidden the money which had been found "in an outhouse and the old brewery." He said that Collins wanted to "sacrifice himself to give his daughter a stake and Edward [sic], his son-in-law, did not have the nerve to keep it but went and gave it all away and the good old man died in vain." The accuracy of the elderly man's recollections is doubtful, as he apparently enjoyed exaggerating his own exploits as a stage driver in various interviews.

Many questions remain. Had the colonel's gun, found beside his body, been fired twice, and was it of the same caliber as the bullet which killed him? Was there any powder on his clothing which would show that the gun was held against his chest when discharged, as a man committing suicide might do?

Many questions remain. Had the colonel's gun, found beside his body, been fired twice, and was it of the same caliber as the bullet which killed him? Was there any powder on his clothing which would show that the gun was held against his chest when discharged, as a man committing suicide might do to assure a quick death? Were the keys to the vault ever found, and were they normally kept in the safe or hidden elsewhere? Then there was an inventory of depository assets reportedly done several days *before* Collins' death in preparation for turning the funds over to Little. The congressional report said that Collins, "with James M. Edgar, his clerk, and John T. Russell, now deceased, a former clerk, had thoroughly examined his books, counted the moneys on hand, and all were found correct." Was all the money there, or did Collins, possibly in collusion with his son-in-law, manage to falsify the records? The clerk, Russell, was apparently never suspected.

There is also the inescapable suspicion that Edgar was somehow involved in the incident, either as perpetrator or accomplice. Collins, a widower, had only the one child and employed her husband as his clerk. If the colonel had lost money gambling or in unwise investments it would seem that Edgar would be aware of the problem or at least suspect it since the two men had such extremely close ties, both professional and familial.

If, on the other hand, Edgar himself had a desperate need for the money, it is possible that his father-in-law, determined that his daughter not be involved in a scandal or impoverished, could have hatched a scheme to cover up any shortage of money which might have been misappropriated and sacrificed himself to the cause. If such was the case no information against Edgar ever surfaced. However, it is true that Edgar would have been totally familiar with all the conditions at the depository and possibly would no longer have been employed there once Little took over. Then there is the question of why an Albuquerque newspaper reported that the recovered funds were found "in the privy of an unoccupied house belonging to Mr. J.M. Edgar, as we were informed by a party from the Capitol last evening." Even if the report were not true, some suspicions must have generated such a story. Also, did the bills which were found consist, at least partially, of those whose serial numbers had been published, thereby making them useless locally?

Regardless of whether James Edgar was involved in Collins' death, he and his wife suffered another blow when they received word of "the cruel murder" of their son less than three months after his grandfather's death. The local newspaper ran a copy of a letter the family received from a man writing from the area of the Mimbres River in southwestern New Mexico. He informed them that their son, James C., had been murdered near that spot by some Texans with whom he had been traveling. The young man's body was not discovered until several days after a large cattle drive, headed for California, had left the area. Two of its employees were suspected of the deed.

With that last irony, the story seems to end. The mystery of James L. Collins' death has remained unsolved, and to this day a cloud of suspicion hovers over his memory, leaving a bizarre end to a long and illustrious public career.

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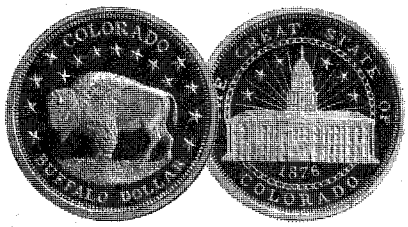

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Wars of Words in California Antigua

By HUGH S. PENN

California State Library

Walter Colton's position as alcalde of Monterey left him time to publish a newspaper.

Newspaper wars erupted in California almost as soon as the first newspapers opened there. Editors were often vitriolic in their ridicule of each other but played an integral part in the growth of early-day California.

The first newspaper, the *Californian*, was a by-product of the Mexican War. Commodore John D. Sloat secured the Pacific Coast as United States territory by raising the flag at Monterey on July 7, 1846. He sailed for other duty, leaving Commodore Robert Stockton as head of the military government there. When Stockton left he made his chaplain, Walter Colton, alcalde (mayor-magistrate) of Monterey.

Colton's official duties took little of his time. He participated in the social life of the capital, noting in his diary the hunting trips, balls, and barbecues in which Californians delighted. He also rummaged through mission buildings and found a dilapidated press that he described as "the chaos of a small concern which had been used by a Roman Catholic monk in printing a few sectarian tracts." Actually, the Mexican civil government of Alta California had used the press. In addition to official documents it printed the eleven books that composed the literary output of the Mexican regime. The most noteworthy of these, the *Compendio de la Gramatica,* contained three pages of errata.

Colton saw the old press as an instrument for spreading the gospel of Americanism and progress. Before his departure Stockton assigned an old salt named Joseph Dockrill to be the printer of Colton's new journal, and he and Colton scoured the corroded type faces, sorted the pi, and cut strips of tin to serve as rules and leads. They found a makeshift paper supply consisting of "what is usually used to envelop the cigar smoked by the natives. . . . It is in sheets a little larger than common-sized foolscap, and this is the size of our first paper, which we have christened the Californian."

Colton's partner in the venture was Robert Semple. He was noteworthy in any group because he was amiable, tall (six-feet, eight-inches), and extremely gaunt. During his trip across the plains to California his buckskin suit had shrunk to his elbows and knees; he topped off this ensemble with an oversized coonskin cap. A standard joke among his fellow emigrants was that he wore his spurs on his calves so as to accelerate his lowly mule. Only rarely was he without a cud of tobacco in his cheek. His friends and neighbors awarded him the title of "doctor."

Soon after his arrival in California he took part in the Bear Flag revolt, a rebellion by a group of Yankee settlers abetted by Lieutenant John C. Frémont. The band of revolutionaries stormed the headquarters of General Mariano G. Vallejo at Sonoma and declared California's independence prior to the United States' declaration of war.

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Frémont insisted on treating the genial Vallejo as a prisoner of war. Semple was one of a party that escorted the general to Sutter's fort. During the ride the two became good friends.

After the Bear Flag affair Semple journeyed to Monterey, where he met Colton and became his partner on the newspaper. Though contributing occasional articles, Semple functioned mainly as business manager and auxiliary printer. Colton lauded him as "true with his rifle, ready with his pen and quick at the type case." But he was often away from his journalistic duties while establishing the new settlement of Francisca just outside of San Francisco with General Vallejo. The founders believed their town would eventually supplant San Francisco. During his absences Colton did all the writing and Dockrill all the printing.

The little paper had many idiosyncracies, the oddest being a sort of speech impediment. Because there is no "w" in Spanish the former press owners had lost or discarded most of that letter. Colton and Semple augmented their slender supply of "w's" with "vv's" and "uu's." One of their articles on temperance read, "causes vvich are to slavery what the worm is to the root of a plant—vvould disclose a thousand streams which are putting out the fire of the distillery and pit. . . . The names of the wicked shall rot." Colton apologized for the problem in an extra on January 28, 1847, and explained that he had ordered some "w's" from the Sandwich Islands.

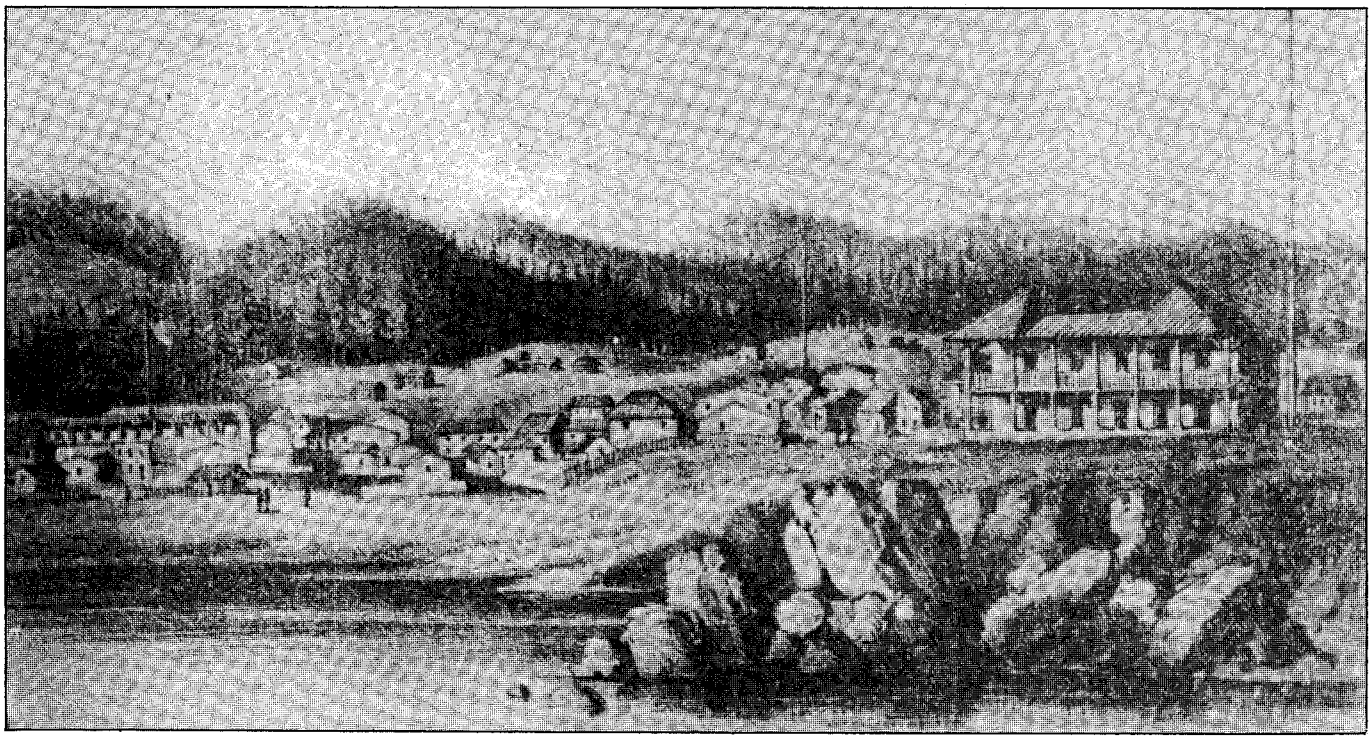
Aside from local happenings the *Californian* staff had few sources of news. A ship brought a journal from some other part of the world only occasionally, military intelligence was infrequent, and news of civilian events outside of Monterey was sketchy. Colton did not even know until January 23, 1847, that a rival newspaper, the *Yerba Buena Star*, had been founded on January 9.

The *Star*'s printing plant came to California with a company of Mormons under Sam Brannan. Brannan intended to start a Mormon paper but changed his mind when he saw that a secular paper would be more profitable. In Yerba Buena Brannan found an editor in Elbert P. Jones, also called a "doctor." According to Edward Kemble, who later clashed with Jones, he was "a thin, green-spectacled bilious-looking personage who had come into the country the year before. He emigrated, it is believed from Tennessee, where he had practiced law." Jones' antecedents are unknown.

Colton had often lamented the lack of an exchange paper, but it was with a tinge of envy that he acknowledged receipt of the first *Star*. After complimentary remarks on the neat typography of the rival sheet, he commented that Joseph Smith had raised Brannan, who was therefore "well qualified to unfold and impress the tenets of his sect."

Elbert P. Jones was of a mettle different from that of his Monterey colleagues. He treated Colton's timid disparagement in ferocious fashion. "We have received two late numbers of the *Californian*, a dim dirty little paper printed in Monterey on the worn out material of one of the old California war presses," he wrote. "It is published and edited by Walter Colton and Robert Semple, the one a lying sycophant and the other an overgrown lickspittle. At the top of one of the papers we find the

"We have received two late numbers of the Californian, *a dim dirty little paper printed in Monterey on the worn out material of one of the old California war presses. It is published and edited by Walter Colton and Robert Semple, the one a lying sycophant and the other an overgrown lickspittle."*



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Early Monterey, California, 1849.

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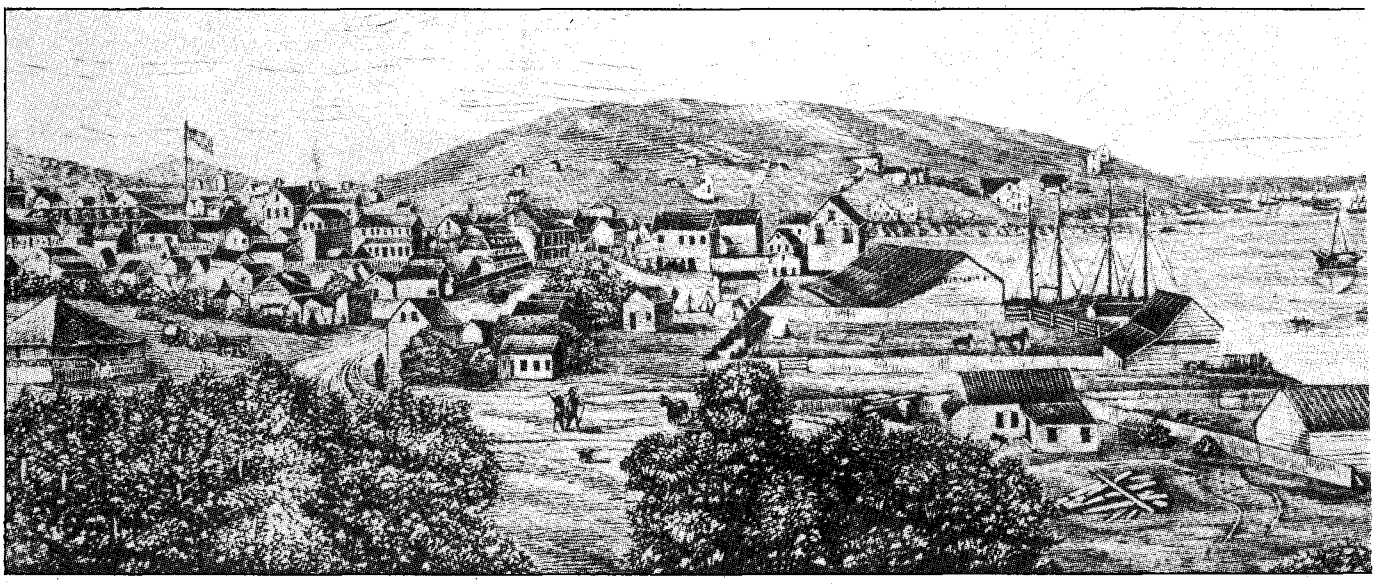

San Francisco, 1849.

words 'please exchange.' This would be considered, in almost any other part of the country, a barefaced attempt to swindle us. . . . We did think of charging the men of the *Californian* five dollars and seventy-five cents 'to boot,' but as it seems to be their disposition to 'hump' themselves in the future, while on the editorial tripod we have concluded to give our paper to them for a year so as to afford them some insight into how a Republican newspaper should be conducted."

Some of the *Californian*'s most interesting news came via the ignoble "washtub mail." Through this channel Colton first learned that American soldiers had taken Los Angeles. Washerwomen who laundered clothes in California's network of waterways picked up the information from Indians who crossed at the fords. When a courier with news of the victory reached Monterey he found that the industrious tongues of the laundresses had relayed the story of the capture three hours ahead of him.

The *Californian*'s war stories aroused Jones' most acidulous mirth. He apologized to his readers for the dearth of news from the front, but said that the only news available was from the *Californian*, and Colton got his news from the Monterey *lavanderas*. "He [Colton] further states that it cannot be questioned that the washerwomen *close by where he lives*, are always the first to receive news of any important movement of the army, and that this mode of getting intelligence completely throws into the shade the carrier-pigeon system and the magnetic telegraph," Jones wrote. "Oh cracky! Where did you come from, PARSON?

"We wonder if the parson is not particularly partial to the washerwomen of his neighborhood?" In later issues, after official dispatches confirmed the washtub mail, the *Star* humbly, if not graciously, reprinted the *Californian*'s war news—without comment. Jones' marriage to Sarah Kittleman of San Francisco on September 18, 1847, may have helped curb his temper.

Colton had other interests than bickering with Jones. He wanted to erect a building in Monterey that would serve as a civic center, and he financed it by levying California's first sin tax. He led raids on gambling games, and fined participants either twenty dollars or an equal amount of labor. His gift to the town was Colton Hall, which housed the California Constitutional Convention in 1849, the first state government, and is today the Monterey City Hall.

Meanwhile the *Yerba Buena Star* became embroiled in local difficulties. Jones and his associate editor, an attorney named Charles Pickett, were battling the military establishment in the persons of First and Second Alcaldes Washington Bartlett and George Hyde. The town chafed under Commodore Stockton's martial law, and Jones and Pickett sought to channel popular discontent into their quest to acquire choice water lots that the alcaldes thought should be preserved for public disposition.

Jones bombarded the military government with accusations that the alcaldes were withholding the property for their own benefit. His articles were unrelenting. When Bartlett changed the name of Yerba Buena to San Francisco, he ordered Semple and Vallejo to change the name of their nearby post; they complied, changing the community's name from Francisca to "Benicia." Bartlett cited an old Spanish document as his authority, but Jones asked if such a rascal could be trusted.

"We have no confidence in a man, who, 'clothed with a little brief authority,' uses it to oppress his fellow creatures and uses the power in his hands to deprive them of their rights," Jones wrote. He promised a documented exposé of Bartlett's malfeasances, but those revelations were never forthcoming. Sam Brannan was away on business, and he knew that if Jones had free rein he could stir up enough trouble to put the struggling *Star* out of business. Before leaving he charged two young printers, Edward C. Kemble and John Eagar, with controlling Jones' fulminations.

When they refused to publish Jones' article about Bartlett, the editor became enraged, producing a "tremendous explosion of wrath." A fistfight ensued, which Kemble won. Kemble said that, "the scene was ludicrous, and rendered laughable by the victor, after the conflict and while the editor was sopping one of his eyes, presenting him with the shattered remnants of his green spectacles."

Kemble and Eagar, pending Brannan's return, became the ad hoc management of the paper. Under their more temperate administration revenues mounted substantially. But no sooner was the *Star* running profitably than

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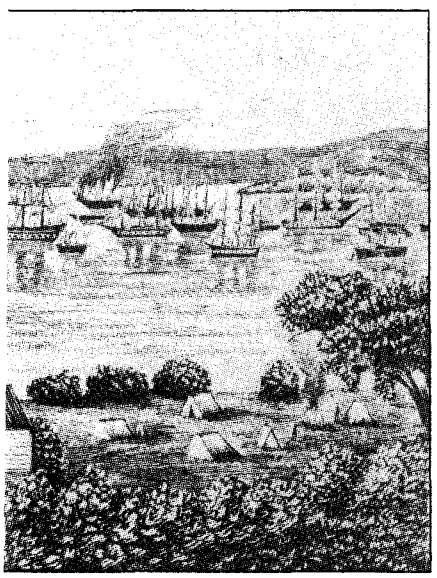

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trouble, in the form of the *Californian* appeared. With the new type Colton had ordered from the Sandwich Islands and newsprint from New York, Semple opened shop in San Francisco in May 1847.

Military authorities, still angry over Jones' comments, welcomed the *Californian* to the city. The government withdrew its official printing from the *Star* and transferred it to the newcomer, aggravating hostilities between the two journals.

Tempers soon flared. Kemble quoted an article in the *Honolulu Polynesian* that described California in the summer as an arid, parched land. This canard, Semple charged, was impure matter derived from the ravings of one E.P. Jones, who seems to have reconciled with the new management of the *Star*.

Kemble responded: "Pray, Neighbor *Californian*, how far back in the past is that day when your dignified and elevated self . . . issued weekly from the capital of our country, pale, emaciated, and distressed, bearing no earthly resemblance to a newspaper, and wretched enough to invoke the spirits of John Faust and Benj. Franklin to sit in judgment on you?

"The *Californian* . . . were it not for the proximity of Benicia would undoubtedly prosper as a newspaper; but as a *private puff organ* . . . we would suggest various improvements, the most important of which would be a change in the editorial department."

Semple countered by saying he had hoped that the *Star* would have been of some public service. But after the paper had reviled him and most public officials, "we remembered the old addage 'if you lie down with dogs, you must rise up with fleas,' and having a great horror of these nasty little insects we took not the slightest notice of the 'great big *Star*.' He [Jones] would have continued this policy if it were not that the present editor, wearing the breeches of a boy, had become convinced that he could fill the trousers of a giant.

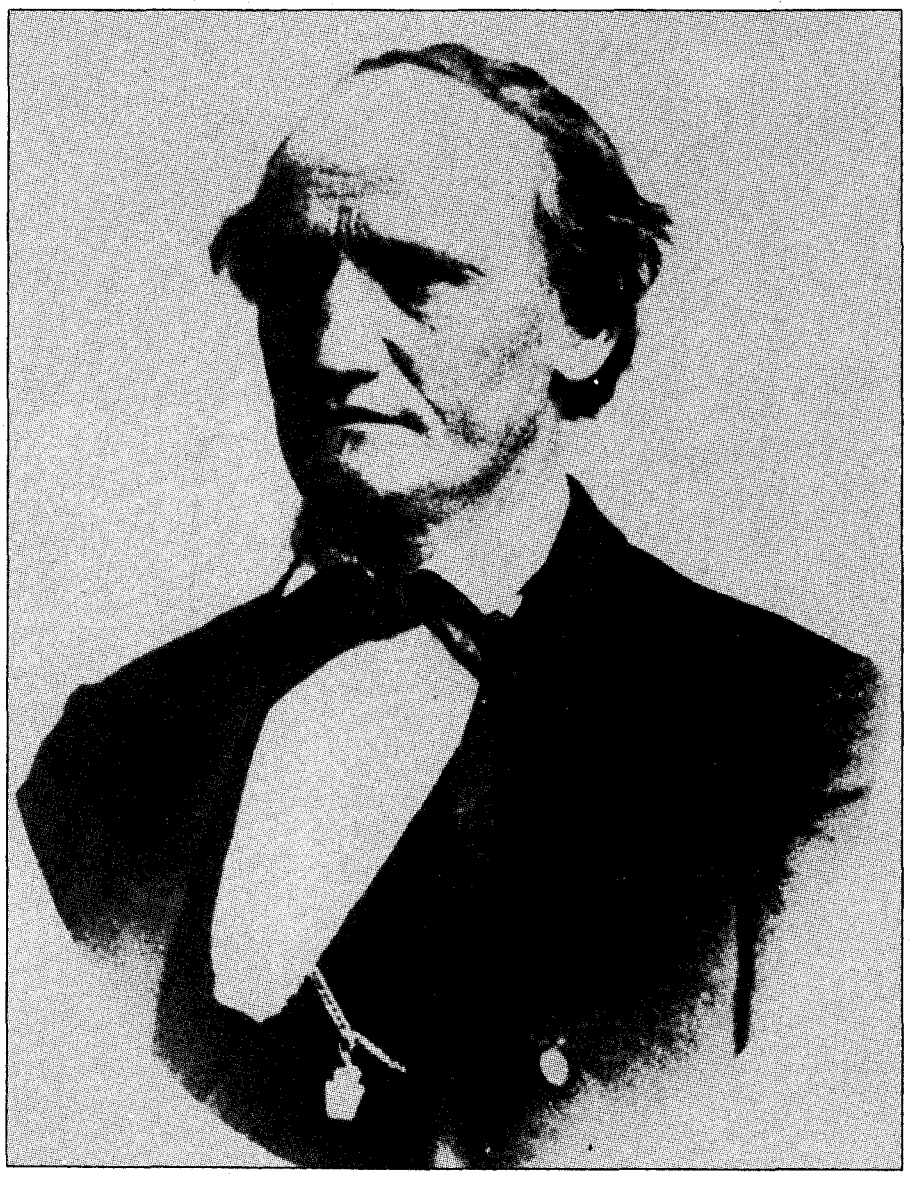
"We have said thus much for the benefit of the *big little man* who ostensibly conducts the *Star* in the Prophet's absence."

Kemble fired the last shot in the battle. Semple's preoccupation with Benicia now outweighed his involvement in San Francisco affairs. He sold the *Californian* to Benjamin R. Buckelew, a jeweler, and departed for his land of opportunity. Kemble noted Semple's departure, saying, "This estimable personage [Semple] was performing a journey to the land of the blessed, not by the Styx, but by the Carquinez Strait [where the runoff of the Sierra Nevada flows into San Francisco Bay] only, where he arrived with a bundle of Benicia puffs under his arm."

Buckelew proved to be a better jeweler than a journalist. Elbert P. Jones, now a real estate magnate, had patched up his differences with Kemble and contributed articles that served their mutual interests. After Jones, who had been elected to the city council, steered official printing back to the *Star*, Buckelew gave up, selling the *Californian* to his printers.

Then the Gold Rush struck and the city's population vanished overnight. Kemble railed against the popular insanity but there was no one left to listen to him. He finally ceased his scolding and joined the race to the Sierra.

Kemble left in June 1848 and returned



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Robert Baylor Semple, a combatant in California's newspaper wars.

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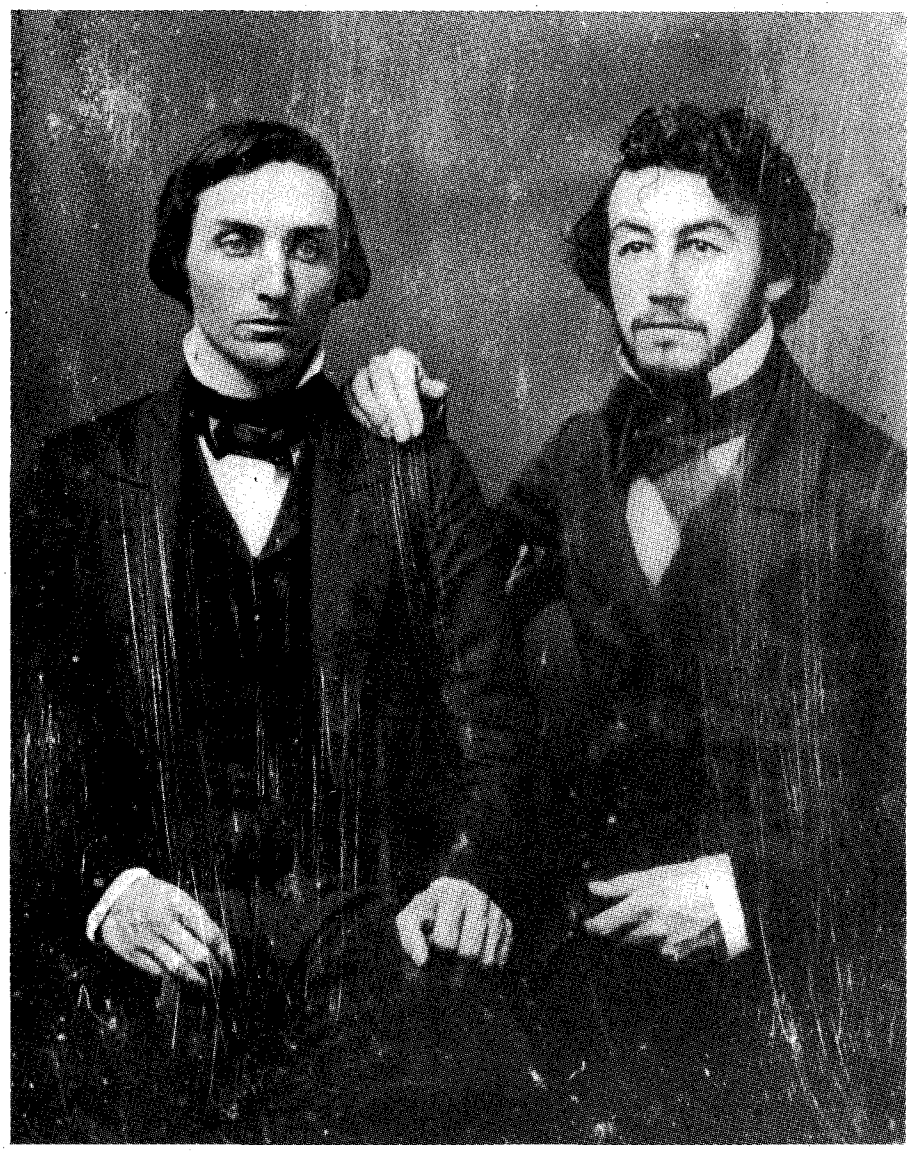

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Edward Gilbert (left) and Edward Kemble founded the leading newspaper of the Gold Rush.

in October with enough gold dust to buy both the *Star* and the *Californian*. He recruited an able writer, Edward Gilbert, and combined the two newspapers into what became the leading newspaper of the Gold Rush, the *Alta California*. The first daily on the Pacific Coast, it was phenomenally successful for a time, but a series of misfortunes plunged the young publisher into ruin. The *Alta* plant was burned out in several fires and competition grew severe. The crowning blow was Gilbert's death in a duel. After passing through several ownerships the pioneer journal expired in the 1870s.

The elders of California's Fourth Estate met varied destinies. Colton returned to sea duty, later resigned and wrote a book about his wartime experiences. He died in 1851.

Semple was fully occupied with launching Benicia, which should have been a model town but which turned into a disaster. Its plight was largely the fault of its progenitor, who reasoned that the advantages of its site were so compelling that they would force people to settle there. He refused to offer any inducement to business and priced residential lots so high that buyers stayed away in droves.

Semple's other operations were equally idiosyncratic. On one occasion business took him to Monterey. On his return the wind was so strong that the ferryman on the north side of the Carquinez Strait ignored his signals. He slept for two nights on the spot where Martinez now stands. Exhausted, wrathful, and hungry, he finally built a raft from two pieces of scantling and a plank that he bound together with his riata. He set out paddling across the Strait in imminent danger of capsizing and drowning, for he could not swim. Friends saw his brightly colored serape blowing in the breeze and came to his rescue.

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Possibly as a result of this misadventure he designed a boat with a "duck-breasted bow" and two engines of different sizes. Critics pointed out that the arrangement was impractical, but Semple explained that he would equalize the power by a system of cogs and gears. However, the launching of the *Colusa* vindicated the skeptics—the craft went only in circles.

More successful was a second town that Semple, along with his brother, founded. It was also named Colusa and today it thrives as an agricultural center. Semple died in 1854 at the age of forty-seven.

Kemble returned to New York in 1855, where he founded a short-lived journal promoting travel to California. He was successively an editor, war correspondent, soldier in the Quartermaster Corps, and inspector of Indian Affairs. In this last capacity his travel often took him to San Francisco, where his advent was always the excuse for a journalistic bash. In his retirement he wrote as a stringer for two San Francisco papers. He died in February 1866, after contracting pneumonia.

There is no precise record of Elbert P. Jones' movements after his eviction from the office of the *Star*. He finally triumphed over his enemies the alcaldes; he obtained the coveted shoreline lots he wanted and became the real estate king of the city.

During his heyday he was described as wearing a long, capacious Spanish cloak with all the dash of a grandee. Rumor ascribed him with more gold dust than anyone else in California. He lavished all his affections on it and at night he would spread sheets on the floor, pour out his auriferous hoard, walk on it, pour it over his head, and finally lie down and wallow in it, "performing Jupiter and Danae with Dr. Jones in both characters," said Kemble.

Like his arrival on the San Francisco scene, Jones' departure and destination are shrouded in confusion. Kemble related that "in the fall of 1849 or '50, he was able to leave San Francisco for his old home in the Southern States, with, it is estimated nearly a million of dollars. He died, however, soon after reaching the Atlantic States and his widow erected a costly monument over his grave." Interestingly, some claim Jones' obsession for his gold killed him. He took all the dust with him when he left California and would not let it out of his sight. He sat up nights brooding over it and finally died of worry and insomnia.

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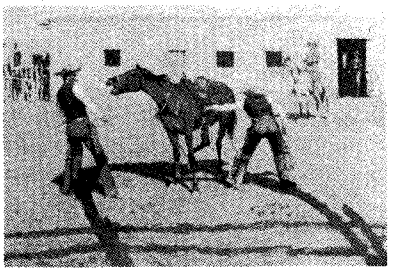

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Women View the West

Love and Glory: Women of the Old West, by Larry D. Underwood. (Media Publishing, 2440 "O" Street, Suite 202, Lincoln, Nebraska 68510-1125. $9.95, paper bound.)

"At first there were only Indian women in the West. But then, beginning in the 1840s, women from the States began arriving. There were not many," Larry Underwood explains.

From this small but continually increasing number, Underwood selected eleven pioneer women to include in his book, *Love and Glory.* Several of the women have been familiar figures in tales of the Old West, but others have been overlooked in the annals of western history.

Susan Magoffin, of Kentucky, kept a diary while traveling westward in 1846. The diary, which included entries describing the long, hard trip by wagon train along the Santa Fe Trail and life on the frontier, was preserved and published in later years. Many western history buffs have already read the diary, but Underwood's synopsis refreshes memories.

The author located long-forgotten books written by some of the women, such as Fanny Kelly, the wife of a Civil War veteran. During their trek westward, she was captured and held captive for several months among the Sioux Indians. Frances Grummond, who lost her husband during the Fetterman Massacre, later wrote a book, *My Army Life.* Her recollections provide a different perspective to that infamous event.

From a collection of letters by Frances Roe, Underwood paints a detailed picture of the hardships of life in a western Army post. Frances and her husband, a lieutenant colonel of staff and judge advocate, were so close that following her death she was buried beside him in Arlington National Cemetery in Washington, D.C.

Underwood tracked down diaries and partial diaries, such as the 400 pages of memoirs written by Josephine Earp. Her version of life with the famous Wyatt Earp provides an insight not always apparent in the stories about his life and times in Tombstone, Arizona.

Old newspaper accounts and government reports revealed the influence women had in carrying Christianity to the Indians. The Reverend Mary Clementine Collins, for instance, spent several decades teaching and preaching to the Indians in the Dakotas.

Other women to whom the author devotes chapters are Cynthia Parker, who was a captive of the Comanches and mother of Quanah Parker; Virginia Reed, a survivor of the Donner-Reed party tragedy; Ida Snow, a "working girl" in Cheyenne, Wyoming; and Kitty LeRoy, a dancing girl in Deadwood City, Dakota Territory.

Carry Nation's story is perhaps the most colorful in the collection. Her rampages against "joints"—as she called bars—gained national fame.

To those readers just becoming interested in the role of women in the West, *Love and Glory* provides an excellent introduction and background information. To those who have done considerable reading about the pioneer women and their husbands, this book provides new material and a refreshing summary with a complete follow-up until their deaths.

Unfortunately, Underwood's unstinting fidelity to fact sometimes gets in the way of easy reading. But by trying to cover eleven remarkable women in 188 pages he had little choice but to condense the recorded information. The fifteen rare photographs from his own collection add to the historical value of the book.—*Willah Weddon, Stockbridge, Michigan.*

General with a Pen

Campaigning with King, by Don Russell, edited by Paul L. Hedren. (University of Nebraska Press, 901 North 17th Street, Lincoln, Nebraska 68588-0520. $25.00, cloth bound.)

General Charles King (1844-1933) was an army officer, military historian, and author of dozens of novels about the Civil War, West Point, the Indian Wars, and the war in the Philippines. King is the only soldier in American history to wear campaign ribbons for conflicts from the Civil War through World War I, and he logged seventy years of military service. Because an Apache arrow shattered his upper right arm, making it too painful to write, King was probably the first novelist to use a dictaphone. In 1869, to augment his measly lieutenant's pay, King played baseball with the Cincinnati Red Stockings, the first professional baseball team in America.

Charles King was born into a family used to making history. A great-grandfather had attended the Constitutional Convention and authored the phrase in the Ordinance of 1787 that banned slavery in the Northwest Territory. King's father was the first commander of the federal "Iron Brigade," which became famous in the Civil War. At the age of twelve Charles began his military career as a "marker" during the drills of his father's regiment. After graduating from West Point, King saw combat against the Apaches in the Southwest, where he received his terrible arm wound.

During the Sioux War of 1876 King was at the Battle of Warbonnet Creek, Nebraska, where Buffalo Bill Cody had his fight with the Cheyenne Chief Yellow Hand. Later that summer King was on General George Crook's infamous "horse meat" march, during which Crook's men endured agonizing hardship. King called the march the worst ordeal the army of the American West ever suffered, and he immortalized it in his book *Campaigning with Crook.* In 1879 King's arm wound compelled his retirement from regular army service, and he became a prolific writer of novels about the frontier army. Widely read and popular in King's day, his novels now seem stilted and dated, but they remain a valuable source for historians studying the army in the American West.

In Wisconsin, King worked with the units that eventually became the basis of the Wisconsin National Guard. In 1899 he commanded a brigade and fought in the Philippines. Despite his age, King trained Wisconsin National Guard units before they went to Europe in World War I; the brave performance of the Wisconsin units in France under appalling combat conditions reflected well on King's skill as a military instructor. In addition to his novels and his work with the Wisconsin National Guard, King also wrote military history,

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his best being a history of the Iron Brigade and a biography of his old friend, General Ulysses S. Grant.

Don Russell, a newspaper man and historian, met King in 1929 and they became close friends. After King's death in 1933, Russell wrote *Campaigning with King*. Unable to find a publisher, Russell let the manuscript languish. In 1984 a copy made its way into the hands of Paul L. Hedren, himself a noted scholar of the Indian Wars.

Now Hedren and the University of Nebraska Press have published *Campaigning with King*. King, much used to the vicissitudes of book publishing, would probably appreciate the irony of his own biography appearing so late.

Hedren's introduction traces the history of the relationship between King and Russell, and he notes the curious history of Russell's manuscript about King. Hedren also gives a short biography of Russell, who himself was such a prolific writer of western American history. A newspaperman, Russell wrote *Campaigning with King* in a brisk, journalistic style. Occasionally Russell's prose betrays the sensibilities of the early 1930s when he originally wrote the manuscript. Together Charles King and Don Russell left behing a remarkable body of work devoted to the history of the Indian Wars and to the American West. Paul Hedren has done full justice to King and Russell, those two tireless campaigners of sword and pen.—*Joseph C. Porter, Omaha, Nebraska.*

Parkman Revisited

The Oregon Trail and *The Conspiracy of Pontiac*, by Francis Parkman, edited by William R. Taylor. (The Library of America, 14 East 60th Street, New York, New York 10022. $35.50, cloth bound.)

Francis Parkman was a gifted and diligent historian who overcame severe physical disabilities to produce works that have never been surpassed in literary artistry and descriptive realism. Parkman was born in 1823 in Boston; from his family he received wealth, social standing, and culture. An enthusiastic student, he entered Harvard at seventeen, and pursued a law degree following his graduation—not to practice law, but to obtain the mental training legal study offered.

Throughout his college years, Parkman regularly journeyed deep into the wilderness on hiking, canoeing, and hunting excursions which excited his imagination. He became an avid outdoorsman, and he trained strenuously at Harvard's new gymnasium. However, Parkman began to suffer from a mysterious disease that he called "the enemy." It afflicted him with semi-blindness, heart problems, arthritis, and other conditions which ultimately rendered him invalid.

In 1846, hoping to recover his health in the West and thirsty for firsthand knowledge of the frontier, Parkman embarked on a journey across the Oregon Trail. He lived for weeks with a band of Sioux, and he met many frontiersmen. Although his adventures exacerbated his physical problems, he was determined to overcome every obstacle and create a historical portrait of the American frontier, with special emphasis on the long conflict between the French and the American colonials.

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While still in college he embarked on the first of a series of European trips which would help him understand French and British cultures, and which allowed him to study documentary evidence. During his most extreme periods of physical disability he was able to afford readers, research assistants, and ingenious devices that would enable him to continue his work. During one period of disability he occupied himself with horticultural studies, acquiring such expertise that he was appointed a professor of horticulture at Harvard.

But always he went back to historical writing. He published his first articles as an undergraduate, and after his six-month trip in 1846 he began to dictate to his cousin and traveling companion, Quincy Shaw, their adventures. "The Oregon Trail" was published serially in the *Knickerbocker*, then appeared in 1849 in book form as *The California and Oregon Trail* (the work became famous under the shorter title, *The Oregon Trail*). Parkman next launched a series of volumes which depicted the clash between the French and their Indian allies against the American colonials and the ambitious English (the first of these was the *History of the Conspiracy of Pontiac*, published in 1851). This epic task consumed most of the remaining decades of his life. When he died in 1893 he was widely recognized as the leading American historian.

Revisionists have greatly reduced the reputations of most nineteenth century historians, but Parkman's work remains historically useful and eminently readable. He was a superb literary craftsman, and his standards of research were unassailable. Not only did he exhaustively mine every available archival record, his association with frontiersmen and explorations of a now-vanished wilderness gave him insights and experiences that would be unavailable to future generations of scholars.

It is therefore significant that the Library of America has recently produced a volume which includes Parkman's autobiographical classic, *The Oregon Trail*, and his memorable *Conspiracy of Pontiac*. (In 1983 the Library of America published Parkman's two-volume study, *France and England in North America*.) The release of the recent volume is particularly attractive because of the popularity of "Dances with Wolves." Those with renewed interest in the customs and attitudes of Native Americans will find Parkman's firsthand observations fascinating. He was only twenty-two when he ventured to the Oregon Trail, and his prose bristles with youthful excitement and enthusiasm. Exuberantly he depicted a frontier and a cast of characters representing America at its rip-snorting best, and any student of the West will profit by obtaining a copy.—*Bill O'Neal, Carthage, Texas.*

Chronicle of a Chief

Cochise: Chiricahua Apache Chief, by Edwin R. Sweeney. (University of Oklahoma Press, 1005 Asp Avenue, Norman, Oklahoma 73019-0445. $27.95, cloth bound.)

Cochise is remembered in popular imagination as one of the most warlike of chiefs among the Apaches, themselves stereotyped as the most ferocious of the Native American tribes who fought to preserve their land and culture against the whites. Tales from the era of the Apache Wars spawned these popular notions about Cochise (ca. 1810–1874) and the various Apache tribes. In reality, the situation facing the Apache tribes and their leaders was very complicated, and Edwin Sweeney's solidly researched and well-written biography of Cochise carefully develops the complex and violent circumstances confronting the four bands of Apaches collectively labeled by outsiders as "Chiricahuas."

Cochise used his intelligence, his extraordinary skill as a leader of raiding and war parties, and his astute and constant manipulation of intra-tribal politics to become a "thoroughly autocratic" leader among the Chiricahua Apaches, a people noted for their firm resistance to chiefs who attempted to centralize power. Indeed, Cochise even brought various Western Apache local groups and bands into his sphere of influence.

Sweeney has diligently researched disparate sources in the United States and Mexico to piece together the intricate history of the Chiricahuas during the life of Cochise. The aftermath of the Mexican War further complicated the situation in Apacheria because the new border between Mexico and the United States bisected the area inhabited and controlled by the Chiricahua bands. Cochise then faced the Mexican states of Sonora and Chihuahua to the south and the United States Army and civilian officials north of the border. Sweeney carefully analyzes how Cochise led his people through the chaotic circumstances that marked the Southwestern border. Cochise raided in both Mexico and the United States, and when compelled to, he pragmatically negotiated with officials in either country. Whether fighting or negotiating, his goal was to assure the survival of the Chiricahua people.

Sweeney's biography is an exterior portrait of Cochise. Readers see outside forces acting upon Cochise and his response to them. The nature of the extant historical sources about Cochise dictate Sweeney's perspective; however, I wish that Sweeney had attempted to present Cochise more within the context of the cultural and religious worldview of the Chiricahuas. Culture and religion were inextricably bound for the Apaches, and they permeated all aspects of Chiricahua life, including leadership, politics, and warfare. Still, this is a caveat, and Edwin R. Sweeney's *Cochise* will join the volumes by Dan L. Thrapp and Eve Ball and by such first-person observers as John G. Bourke, Britton Davis, Geronimo, and Jason Betzinez as essential reading about the troubled history of Apacheria and the Apache tribes.—*Joseph C. Porter, Omaha, Nebraska.*

Mrs. Jesse James, Jr.

In the Shadow of Jesse James, by Stella Francis James, edited by Milton F. Perry. (Dragon Books, P.O. Box 6039, Thousand Oaks, California 91359. $15.95, cloth bound.)

Mrs. Jesse James, Jr., originally wrote this book to protest a 1958 television show that portrayed her husband as a gunfighter. Shocked and incensed, Stella James wrote the book about her life as the wife of the son of one of America's best known outlaws. Historians are better off for her efforts.

James' narrative is fast-paced, from her first meeting with her future husband on Valentine's Day, 1899, to a meeting with J. Frank Dalton, who claimed to be the real Jesse James. She refers to the love affair between Anne Ralston and Frank James, which is discussed nowhere else. There is information about her husband's movie venture (playing the role of his father) which nearly destroyed him. There are no answers, however, to compelling questions about the famed Northfield, Minnesota, raid.

What is most important about the book is that it is a narrative dealing with the James saga written by an insider, an adult capable of interpretation and judgment. Jesse's son wrote about the life of his father, but that was through the eyes of a seven-year-old. Cole

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Younger and Jim Cummins wrote their stories but left out some information for obvious reasons.

Milton F. Perry, who died in August, was perhaps the most qualified person to edit the manuscript. His years as director of historical research and development in Clay County, Missouri, where the James Farm is located, made him well-suited for the task. Thirty pages of footnotes reveal his ability to unearth obscure but relevant details corroborating Stella James' memoirs. It is a pity her manuscript was not longer, as it is interesting and enjoyable reading.—*Chuck Parsons, South Wayne, Wisconsin.*

Firearms History

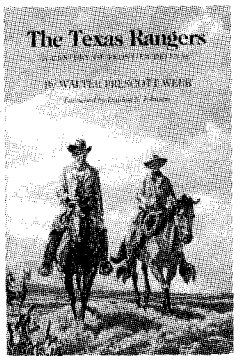
Winchester: An American Legend, by R.L. Wilson. (Random House, 201 East 50th Street, New York, New York 10022. $65.00, cloth bound.)

With over twenty books to his credit, Larry Wilson is rapidly becoming the Dee Brown, Glenn Shirley, or Doc Sonnichsen of American firearms historians. He has also reached a point that few writers ever see—Wilson's name on a book assures readers that they are going to get their money's worth, and then some.

Winchester: An American Legend does not disappoint. It is as strong as any of Wilson's previous books, which have included such titles as *The Book of Colt Firearms*, *The Deringer in America*, and *Colt: An American Legend*. It certainly will become a "must have" book for every firearms reference library.

Wilson's book shines in that, without dragging through endless historical trivia and gun descriptions, it offers the necessary background about how the Winchester firm came into existence. At the same time it includes an array of stunning photographs, both vintage and new.

The companion volume to this book, Wilson's *Colt: An American Legend*, earned an American Book Award nomination for the author. That kind of honor for a gun book speaks for itself. In short, to the part-time or full-time historian, and to the gun collector, this book is priceless. The appendix on all Winchester production dates and serial numbers is alone worth the money. Wilson adds one final extra touch to his books—autographed copies can be ordered directly from him for $65 postpaid, in care of R.L. Wilson, Box 430, Hadlyme, Connecticut 06439.—*Lee A. Silva, Long Beach, California.*



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Trails Grown Dim

Hudgins

I am trying to find the identities of the parents of Isaac Hudgins, who was born January 23, 1792, in Virginia or South Carolina. I would also like to know the identities of his brothers and sisters.

Isaac married his first wife, Mary Mims, on June 20, 1815, in Jones County, Georgia. Their children were William Madison, born July 27, 1816; Juliann (Daw), born in 1817; Daniel W., born March 5, 1820; Hadwell Andrew, born March 18, 1822; Mary Jane, born July 27, 1824; Melinda Caroline, born June 18, 1826; Maria Elizabeth, born June 10, 1828; and Isaac Hudgins II, born October 10, 1831. Mary Mims Hudgins died October 28, 1832.

Isaac then married his second wife, Elizabeth Ann Hill, in Columbia County, Arkansas, on October 28, 1832. Their children were Marcus Lafayette, born January 18, 1836; Elvira P., born June 19, 1837; Elizabeth Ann, born July 15, 1839; Major Hill, born March 8, 1841; Giles, born April 22, 1843; Wiley Thomas, born January 13, 1845; Martha Francis, born in 1847; Amber, born August 25, 1851; and John Thomas, born March 23, 1855.

Isaac Hudgins was in Dallas County, Alabama, in 1820; in Shelby County, Alabama, in 1830; in Tippah County, Mississippi, in 1840; and in Union County, Arkansas, in 1850. I would appreciate any help.—**Pauline Hill, Route 2, Box 1508, Poteet, Texas 78065.**

Simerly

I am trying to find any descendants of a John Simerly. He was last heard of in parts of Oklahoma and north Texas. John was a resident of east Tennessee before going West in the early 1900s.—**Vergil Milligen, P.O. Box 110, Hansen, Idaho 83334.**

Rankin

I am trying to find the date and place of my great-grandparents' marriage. They were David Rankin, born in 1820 in South Carolina, and Mary Jane Nelson, the daughter of John Nelson, born about 1847 in Texas. The 1870 and 1880 census shows this family lived in Wilson and Karnes counties, Texas.

Their children were Malinda, born about 1864; Mary, born about 1866; Annie E., born January 19, 1868; Nancy Jane "Jennie," born July 11, 1871; Eva, born about 1872; Zella Green, born July 26, 1873; an infant boy, born and died in 1875; a baby girl, born in 1878; David Saphronia, a female, born in July 1880; and James Richard Collie "Dick," born October 13, 1882. All of them were born in Texas.

I would also like to find when and to whom Malinda and Mary were married. I would appreciate any information.—**Pauline Hill, Route 2, Box 1508, Poteet, Texas 78065.**

Wheeler

I am looking for any information on a Dr. Peter Lansing Wheeler. He was practicing in the San Francisco Bay area in the 1870s. He died at Merritt Hospital, of which he was founder, on or about October 2, 1935, at the age of ninety-one. He lived at 2012 Broadway, Oakland, California, and was buried in the Mountain View Cemetery in Oakland.

His wife, Kate Kirkham Wheeler, and three children, Mrs. Frederick Horner Johnson, Catherine K. Wheeler, and Kirkham Wheeler, were all of San Francisco. Dr. Wheeler came from the Greene area of New York State.

I would appreciate any information and will reply to all letters. I have a good family history of the Lansings and the Wheelers that I am willing to share with anyone who will respond.—**Margaret Lansing Parker, Route 4, Box 391-B, Canyon Lake, Texas 78133.**

Glover

I am looking for information on Richard R. Glover, born in 1814 in Tennessee. He married Matilda Farral (or Ferrel), around 1844. He died in Giles County, Tennessee, in July 1906, and Matilda died April 13, 1908, also in Giles County. They were buried in the Pleasant Ridge cemetery.

Their children were Thomas M., born May 20, 1844; James G. (or J.), born in 1846; Richard M., born in 1850; Louisa Jane (my great-grandmother), born October 14, 1851; Eliza E., born in 1854; Matilda F., born in 1856; and Martha M., born in 1859. All were born in Tennessee. Thomas died May 10, 1909, in Tennessee, and Louisa Jane died July 26, 1926, in Oklahoma.

I would also appreciate any information on Louisa Jane's husband, Elisha G. Garner, born in April 1849 in Tennessee. They were married September 22, 1870, in Lawrence County, Tennessee. He died around 1900 in Clarksville, Texas, when he accidentally shot himself with a handgun.

Elisha was the son of John and Sarah Garner. His brothers and sisters were Elvira E., born in 1847; Willis E., born in 1851; Hennretta, born in 1860; John, born in 1862; Nef, born in 1866; George, born in 1869; Thomas, born in 1870. All were born in Tennessee.—**Jouise Garner Fletcher, 428 Lois Street, Clifton, Colorado 81520.**

Ward-Knight

I would like information on the John Ward family that lived in the Spanish territory around Mobile Bay in 1792. John was born about 1757. He married Nancy Knight (a part- or full-blood Creek Indian) about 1775, in Eufala, Creek Nation, on the Chattahoochee River. She is possibly the daughter or aunt of Andrew Jackson Knight.

I am also seeking information on Elijah Ward, born between 1776 and 1779. He died in Walton County, Florida, in 1860. Elijah married Sarah Cochran on April 4, 1816, in Clarke County, Alabama.—**Betty Celani, 1340 Sabrina Lyn, El Paso, Texas 79936.**

Bickers

I would like some information on my grandfather, Pleasant Earl Bickers, born 1901 and died in 1990. He was born

Readers' letters for "Trails Grown Dim" are printed as soon as space permits, so please be patient. Please type or print your query and limit letters to 150 words or less. Photos are welcome. We can't run current "missing persons" notices or lengthy genealogical requests, but we do attempt to print all letters as soon as we can. Any reader having information concerning persons referred to above is asked to communicate directly with the letter writer; please do not write to us.

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in Douglas, Arkansas, and married Ena Grace.

My great-grandparents were Robert Lee Bickers, born in Pleasant Plains, Independence County, Arkansas, and Alice Sollars, born in Missouri.

My great-great-grandparents were John William Bickers and Dorthy Dolly Bickers (maiden name unknown). I do not have their birth dates, nor those of my great-grandparents. My mother was born Alice T. Bickers and I am trying to trace the family tree on her side.—**Allen Vaughan, 9430 Case Road Southwest, No. 4, Olympia, Washington 98502.**

Owens

I am seeking information concerning Charles B. "Doc" Owens, born in 1856 and died in 1938. Doc Owens was an actor, lecturer, and patent medicine salesman at various times. He was also said to have been a medical school graduate and to have served as an army scout. He may have been with the 101 Ranch Wild West Show, or another show, in the early 1900s.—**Richard C. Osterhout, 309 Hemlock Avenue, Bensalem, Pennsylvania 19020.**

Herfordt-Gapsch

I am interested in corresponding with anyone who has information on William Herfordt and his family. He was born in Germany and in 1880 settled for a time in Affton, Missouri. He had five children, Herman, Gustve, Gusta, Pauline, and Emma. Emma was born in 1875 and left Affton with a Dr. Rooten. The others were last known to be in the Indian Territory or Fort Smith, Arkansas, areas.

William Herfordt was an uncle of my father, Edward Gapsch. I would be interested in information on anyone with the Gapsch name.—**Alvina Myers, 1690 Saline Road, Fenton, Missouri 63026.**

Hemstead

I am searching for any information about the following couples: Samuel Hemsted and Eliza Thompson, married May 6, 1860; Frederick Hemsted and Elisa Aikers (or Akers), wedding date unknown; Mose Aikers (or Akers), and Elnora (last name unknown), wedding date unknown; James Magruder and Ruth Stover, married November 17, 1839; and Andrew Fountain and Esther Woods, married September 25, 1861.

Most of these marriages occurred in Johnson County, Iowa. I would ap-

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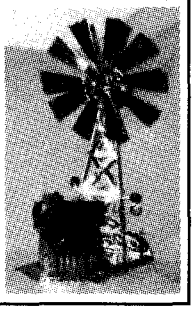

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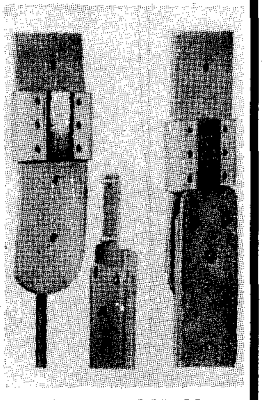

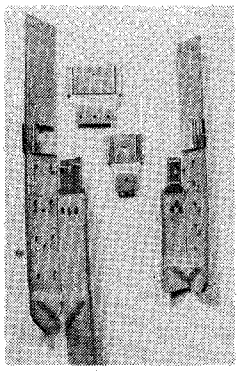

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preciate any information on them, or perhaps an indication of where records might be.—**Ruth Ann Burk, 5141 Oakcrest Hill Road, S.E., Riverside, Iowa 52327-9046.**

Seymour

I am seeking information on the ancestors of my great-great-grandfather and four of his children. His name was George Roferson Seymour, born in 1798 in England and died January 10, 1878, in Valley Mills, Texas. He was married to a Rebecca A. Brown in Bourbon County, Kentucky. They had four children, John R., Richard A., James C., and Sarah Elizabeth.

John R. Seymour, was born in 1824 in Kentucky. He went to Lincoln County, Missouri, with his parents. He married in Missouri and had four children, Rebecca A., Sarah E., Ellen, and James K. He was a physician. John died in 1882 in Lamar County, Texas.

Richard A. Seymour was born in 1830, also in Kentucky. He went to Lincoln County, Missouri, where he married a woman named Martha. They had five children, William R., Susan R., Martha E., Eliza A., and Emma. He went to McLennan County, Texas, close to Valley Mills.

James C. Seymour was born April 13, 1832, in Lincoln County, Missouri. He married Martha J. Tenton November 2, 1854, and in 1855 went to McLennan County, Texas. He had six children, Olivia, Richard, William, James, Joseph, and Hiram.

Sarah Elizabeth was born in 1837 in Lincoln County, Missouri. She married James Cochran from Kentucky in 1859. They had four children, Mary R., William, Martha A., and James C. They also moved to McLennan County, Texas.—**Maxine Taylor, 913573 Easy Street, Prineville, Oregon 97754.**

Jennings, Short, Rogers

Wesley Preston Jennings married Margaret Short and the couple had thirteen children. In 1870 they lived in Grayson County, Texas. Their youngest child, Laura Bell (1870-1970), married Reubin Silvester Rogers (1871-1960). I am looking for information on any of these people, as well anyone named Love. I will exchange information.—**William D. Rogers, P.O. Box 355, Hartford, Arkansas 72938.**

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Jack Slade vs. Jules Reni

—1858 and 1859, Colorado Territory—

By BILL O'NEAL

Sam Clemens was captivated by the stories he heard about Jack Slade during his stagecoach ride to the West in 1861. In his autobiographical classic, *Roughing It*, Clemens described the bloody tales he had heard about Slade, relating that this "matchless marksman with a navy revolver" had gunned down twenty-six men. Slade was a line superintendent for the Central Overland California and Pike's Peak Express Company, and during the course of his journey Clemens breakfasted at a stage station with the notorious superintendent. Clemens found him to be courteous and unremarkable in appearance, "except that his face was rather broad across the cheekbones, and that the cheekbones were low and the lips were peculiarly thin and straight. But...since then I seldom see a face possessing those characteristics without fancying that the owner of it is a dangerous man."

Although Slade's reputation was greatly exaggerated, he was involved in two vicious encounters with a desperado named Jules Reni. Joseph Alfred Slade was born in 1824 in Carlyle, Illinois. He left home in the 1840s and volunteered for service in the Mexican War. After his discharge he married and found employment with the Central Overland stage line, winning promotion to line superintendent by 1858.

Soon Slade had trouble with Jules Reni, a native of Canada who had been stealing horses from the Central Overland. Slade rode to Reni's center of operations at Julesburg, Colorado, to investigate. Reni approached Slade in the street and fired twice at point-blank range. Slade collapsed and Reni triggered three more rounds into the fallen man.

Reni ordered bystanders to bury Slade, but an angry mob chased the outlaw out of town, whereupon Slade somehow staggered to his feet. After a lengthy convalescence Slade recovered his health and resumed his duties.

Western Publications Photo

Of uncertain authenticity, this often published drawing is said to be from a photograph of Jack Slade.

The following year Reni was captured and delivered to Slade's ranch near Cold Springs, Colorado. Slade assumed that Reni had been planning to bushwhack him, and he ordered his old adversary bound to a fencepost. Swigging deeply from a whiskey bottle, Slade began methodically to shoot Reni in the arms and legs. Finally he jammed his revolver into the wounded man's mouth and pulled the trigger. Slade reportedly assisted with the burial, first slicing the ears off the corpse. Clemens reported that Slade put the ears "in his vest pocket, where he carried them for some time with great satisfaction."

Increasingly troubled with alcoholism, Slade became involved in an 1862 shooting scrape at Fort Halleck, Wyoming. A warrant was issued for his arrest, but he moved to Virginia City, Montana, where he tried to start a ranch.

Now a constant troublemaker, Slade became involved in a saloon quarrel on March 10, 1864. Exasperated citizens dragged him outside and threw a rope over a beam holding a sign.

"My God! My God!" cried Slade. "Must I die like this? Oh my poor wife!"

Intending to bury her husband in his native Illinois, Virginia Slade sealed the corpse inside a tin coffin filled with raw alcohol. Upon reaching Salt Lake City, however, the body was so odorous that it was buried in the Mormon cemetery on July 20, 1864—more than four months after the lynching.

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Great Airliner of 1849

By RICHARD BAUMAN

The headline above the annoucement in New York City newspapers early in 1849 declared the "Best Route to California." The story beneath it was a seemingly ludicrous tale from what was proposed to be America's first airline.

"R. Porter & Company . . . are making active progress in the construction of an Aerial Transport for the express purpose of carrying passengers between New York and California," the story read. "It is expected to put this machine in operation about the 1st of April, 1849 . . . the transport is expected to make a trip to the gold region and back in seven days . . . the price of passage has been fixed at $200."

While the lure of glittering gold and instant wealth was enough to prompt many easterners to abandon all and head for California, most wanted fast transportation. Ships heading for California were plentiful but expensive, and took several weeks sailing time. Crossing the country by wagon was arduous as well. Thus when Rufus Porter claimed he would be able to fly gold-hungry men to the West Coast, there was immense interest in his plan.

In offering passage by air to California, Porter had come up with what he perceived was a viable scheme. He believed he could fly passengers to California in just three days. He even had pamphlets printed describing his flying machine, and started accepting reservations from would-be miners.

The title page of the pamphlet read, "Aerial Navigation—The Practicability of Traveling Pleasantly and Safely from New York to California in Three Days—Fully Demonstrated with a Full Description of a Perfect Aerial Locomotive, with Estimates of Capacity, Speed, and Cost of Construction. By Rufus Porter, Original Editor of the New York Mechanic, Scientific American, and Scientific Mechanic."

Incredible as it may seem, the first transcontinental journey by air was scheduled just over 140 years ago. Equally incredible, more than 200 people booked passage.

Illustrations by BUD McCAULLEY

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After months of research, Porter had developed plans for an "aerial locomotive," that he believed could successfully make the trip. His airship consisted of two main sections—a large, cigar-shaped hydrogen balloon, and, suspended from the balloon by steel wires, a passenger compartment.

The balloon was supposed to be made from sturdy cloth treated with an India rubber solution and stretched taut over a framework of spruce rods. Inflated, this airtight bag would contain 858,000 cubic feet of hydrogen. It would provide sufficient buoyancy, according to Porter's calculations, to carry aloft some 56,000 pounds.

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Locomotion was to come from six light boilers and two steam engines in an enclosed central cabin. There were to be a pair of propelling wheels mounted atop the passenger compartment. Each wheel was supposed to be twenty-feet in diameter and have eight fan-shaped arms. These, Porter estimated, would propel the airship at sixty to one hundred miles per hour.

Most New Yorkers were skeptical of Porter's airship and first scheduled flight. Leading scientists scoffed at the idea, and refused to examine his drawings. The only group that supported Porter's undertaking was the gold seekers. While transportation to the Pacific Coast in three days was an expensive gamble, if it succeeded it was well worth it.

Unfortunately, Porter's Aerial Locomotive never got off the drawing board. Public skepticism caused Porter's backers to withdraw financial support, and the remarkable scheme for America's first transcontinental airline folded.

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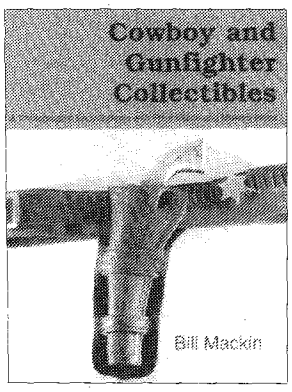

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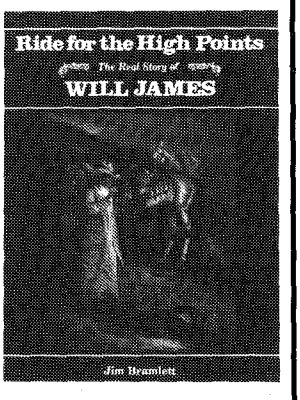

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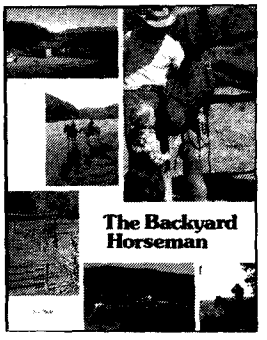

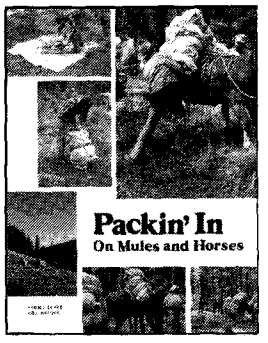

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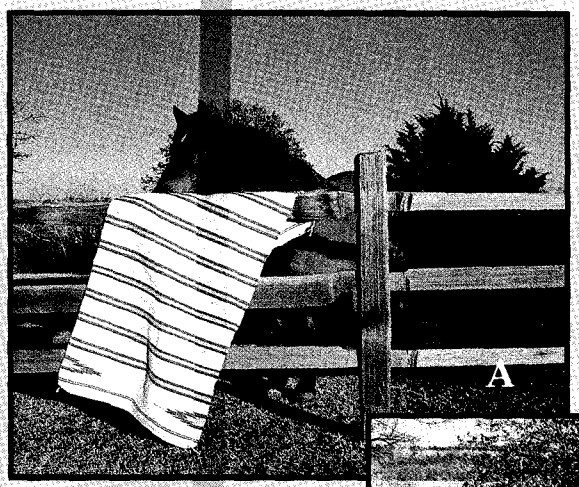

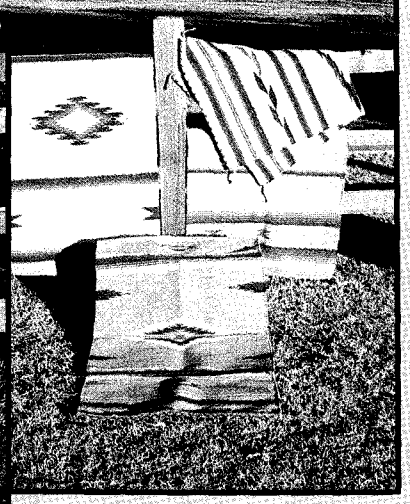

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